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AT THE ALTAR.

The word is spoken,
  Hand to hand and heart to heart;
Though all other ties be broken,
  Time these bonds will never part.

Thou hast taken her in gladness
  At the altar's holy shrine,
Oh! remember in her gladness
  She is thine and only thine.

In so fair a temple never
  Aught can hope to come;
God's will to do and striving ever
  Makes so fair a shrine its home.

Each the other's will possessing,
  See that care ne'er clouds her brow;
She'll be thine, and thine forever,
  And a shield to her be thou.

Fettered, Yet Free.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.—(CONTINUED.)

SIR HUGH glanced back to the window; they were alone; Montagu Arnold had left them, passing out on to the verandah without attracting their attention.

Without the slightest diminution of the tenderness of his manner, Sir Hugh led Cecil to a chair, and gently making her sit down, he knelt down beside her and encircled her with his arms; the girl's fair head fell heavily upon his shoulder, the tears were rolling down her cheeks, and he could feel how the slight form trembled in his arms.

Her intense agitation seemed to give him calmness; a guilty woman would not have been so agitated, he thought, as he bent his head over hers until his cheek rested on her hair.

"Now tell me, darling," he said tenderly. "Here, in my arms, tell me all, and you will see how merciful I can be, and how easily I can forgive, if there is anything to forgive you, my dearest."

"Am I that, Hugh?" she asked, with her wet cheek resting upon his shoulder, her whole heart going out in response to the tenderness of his manner; she had never loved him more dearly than she did now, when she was about to lose him.

"Are you what, dear?" he queried gently, vaguely alarmed at her manner.

"Your dearest?" she said, scarcely above her breath.

"My very dearest," he answered fondly. "My very dearest in all this wide, wide world."

A shiver shook her from head to foot, a shiver as of intense cold. He slowly endeavored to release himself from her, but her hands tightened over his.

"You are leaving me?" she said faintly, looking up at him with wet eyes.

"I am only going to shut the window, love; you seem cold."

"No, I am not cold, and I like the air," she answered faintly; and he knelt down beside her again and drew her fondly into the shelter of his strong arms.

Her tears had ceased now; she was looking up at him with dim, drowned eyes, which yet saw all the tenderness in his expression, the grave, proud beauty of the face on which she was gazing, perhaps for the last time.

She knew that within the next hour the love-story of her life would be over; he himself had said that the only thing he could not forgive her was love gained and retained by deliberate falsehoods and deceit, and ever since they had met she had been a living lie, the incarnation of falsehood!

Oh, how terrible it seemed to think of the love and tenderness dying out of his eyes, and hatred growing there in their stead—hatred and contempt.

He had been so angry at the thought that she had deceived him about Montagu Arnold; the look in his eyes had seemed to give her physical pain when he looked angrily at her.

Ah, if she could but die now in his arms, with her head upon his breast, her hand in his! If this heavily laboring heart, which the doctors had told her would kill her some day, would only break now and spare her further suffering! Her eyes were dim and misty, her lips pallid; there was a cold moisture on her white brow as she rested in his arms, longing for death.

"Cecil?" Sir Hugh said gently, but it seemed as if she scarcely heard him, and he repeated her name. "Cecil, my darling?" he urged tenderly, "I am afraid you are ill. Let me call Laura or your maid, I will come to you again when you are stronger."

The words seemed to rouse her a little.

"No, no," she said hurriedly. "No, I am ready; I am quite ready."

She had raised her head from his shoulder as she spoke, but she still clung to him with her cold, trembling hands.

"Hold me," she said wildly. "Hold me, Hugh, for soon you will put me out of your arms and out of your heart for ever."

"That is impossible, love," he whispered tenderly. "I could not cease to love you if I would?"

"You could not cease to love the woman you think I am," she said sadly; "but when you know the real Cecil, you will wonder that you ever loved her, Hugh," Her arms crept up and were clasped about his throat. "Kiss me once, dear, just once more."

He stooped his head over hers, and their lips met in a long, close kiss, close and clinging as the kiss we press on our dear one's lips when they leave on a long journey, or at the end of life; then slowly, lingeringly, she removed her arms, disengaged herself from his arms and walked away from him.

Suddenly she paused and put both hands up to her head, while an expression of intense pain crossed her face altering it terribly.

"Cecil?" Sir Hugh exclaimed going to her; but she had recovered herself immediately.

"It is nothing," she said quickly, and her hands fell heavily at her side, as she stood for a moment irresolute.

There was a short silence. Cecil was the first to break it, speaking in a strange, dull, muffled, tuneless voice, from which all its wonted sweetness had fled.

"Where is Mr. Arnold?" she asked. "He was here, I thought."

"He is outside," Sir Hugh answered, startled at the tone in which she spoke.

"Ask him to come in."

Sir Hugh moved toward the glass door in silence, then paused, hesitated, and came back to her side.

"Cecil," he said gently, "let us defer all further explanation until to-morrow. You are fit for no further agitation to-day. I can wait—I will gladly wait; indeed, I cannot easily forgive myself for being the cause of so much distress of mind to you.

She looked at him tenderly.

"You the cause," she said gently. Ah, no! The suffering I endure I have brought solely upon myself; I can blame no one for it. But what adds incalculably to its bitterness, is the knowledge that I have given such pain to you—to you whom I love so well, Hugh." She put out her hand and touched his arm gently, timidly. "Always believe that I love you—that when I sinned against you most deeply, yet, still I loved you—that I never loved you so well as now, when I am giving you so much pain."

"I think I can bear the pain, with the knowledge of your love to help me," he said tenderly.

"But by-and-by you will cease to believe in my love," she replied, with a faint, fleeting smile, "and you will hate me. Now, call him in, while I have strength left to hear the truth."

In silence, more and more alarmed every moment, Sir Hugh passed out on to the verandah.

Montagu Arnold was there, leaning against a pillar, looking thoughtfully out at the falling rain, but at the sound of Sir Hugh's footstep he turned quickly, and seeing the squire's pallor and agitation, started eagerly forward.

"She has told you?" he said hoarsely.

"She has told me nothing yet," Sir Hugh answered slowly. "Come in, Monty, she is asking for you."

There was no trace of resentment or anger in his voice now, only intense sadness. Montagu Arnold's heart ached for him as he followed him into the room, where Cecil stood waiting.

The sun was setting in the western sky, and some of its rays had crept in at the window and shone feebly in the little room, giving a faint radiance to the slender, white figure standing there, looking strangely forlorn and desolate in its dainty surroundings.

The room was exquisitely furnished; the walls were of French grey, with slender gold mouldings, and the subdued coloring of the furniture was lighted here and there by a touch of vivid coloring in the rich hues of a cushion or antimacassar. There were few ornaments, but these were of value and in perfect taste.

On a little table near was a photograph of Sir Hugh, in a chased silver frame, while in a small vase before it, a few starry blossoms of the stephanotis gleamed. Cecil was looking at the photograph as the two young men entered the room.

As she slowly removed her gaze from it and looked at them, Montagu Arnold was reminded of a look he had once seen in a deer surrounded by the staghounds; it was so full of yearning, of appeal, of pain.

But her voice was very calm and steady as she turned to him.

"You remember where you first saw me," she said. "He will hear it better from you, perhaps. Tell him who and what I am."

CHAPTER XXII.

It would be no exaggeration to say that Montagu Arnold would have faced a fair amount of physical danger more easily and with less shrinking than he faced the ordeal before him.

He loved Hugh Danecourt with a sincere affection, he felt for him the truest friendship, and he shrank, with a natural, intense reluctance, from inflicting the wound which he knew would be so deep a one. But he felt that every moment but added Sir Hugh's suspense and pain, that the terrible story he must hear was better over, that perhaps the pain of it would not be harder to bear than the agony of uncertainty which looked at him out of Hugh Danecourt's eager, sorrowful blue eyes.

He glanced at Cecil, she stood motionless, both hands pressed to her heart, her face was colorless as her gown; she looked, in her white raiment and marble pallor, like some beautiful statue of Despair.

He averted his eyes from hers quickly, and his voice was a little unsteady as he began to speak, while his face was hardly less pale than her own.

"When you asked me a while ago what Cecil Lestrange was to me," he said unsteadily, "I told you nothing, and I spoke the truth, Hugh! But I told you that I had seen her before. We had met; at least we had seen each other under circumstances which I look back to now with much pain. Do you remember," he drew near Sir Hugh and laid his kindly hand on his shoulder, "some time ago, when I was on circuit in Wales, I was junior in a case which caused very much excitement at the time? A poisoning case?"

"Yes, I remember. But what has that to do——"

"You shall hear in a moment," the barrister said gently, his kind hand still resting on his friend's shoulder, his face full of sympathy and sorrow. "The prisoner, a young girl, was accused of poisoning her husband."

"Yes, yes; I remember perfectly. She was acquitted was she not? But what has this to do with Cecil?" Sir Hugh said impatiently, utterly unsuspicious even now, of the blow which was about to fall on him.

"Much," Montagu Arnold said sadly, everything; for the girl accused and acquitted, whom I saw in the crowded court on that day, I saw again yesterday."

"Yesterday?" repeated Sir Hugh, a deathlike pallor creeping over his face, his eyes darkening with a look of horror. "Where?"

"In your grounds. I recognised her again in the woman to whom I was presented as to your future wife."

An exclamation of pain and of horror, broke from Sir Hugh's lips, as he staggered back, steadying himself with his hand on a chair. The exclamation was followed by a silence as intense as that which reigns where the dead are.

Cecil stood motionless as a statue; all life seemed to have faded from her limbs; all expression from her face, save that terrible anguish, awful to look upon, which looked out of her shining eyes as they rested on Sir Hugh.

He was not looking at her but at the friend who had spoken. His face had changed from pallor to ghastliness; some of the strength and vigor seemed to have left his limbs.

It was as if that moment, when the awful truth had been hurled at him, had changed him from a young man into a middle-aged one, so great was the change in him. Montagu Arnold would hardly have been surprised if he had seen his hair turn gray.

The silence was broken by a low, terrible laugh, which rose suddenly on the stillness of the room, a laugh leaning from Hugh Danecourt's lips.

"Ah!" he said, in a changed, hoarse voice, as painful to hear as the laugh was. "A good joke that, but not in very good taste, Monty! Did you expect me to believe you? I almost did for a moment, you said it so well! The woman whom you saw accused of murder, you met again as—as—my future wife! It has rather a ghastly sound when dissected, this pleasantry of yours! My beautiful Cecil a——"

Before he could utter the word, a low, faint cry escaped her and silenced him; he turned his eyes upon her for a moment and saw in her anguish-stricken face the confirmation of his friend's words, but yet he would not believe.

"Yes, it is an ugly word, even when said in jest," he said huskily. "I won't utter it Cecil, but—why are you looking at me in that way, Monty? Am I doing or saying anything outrageous? Am I even reproaching you as I might do for that ill-timed jest which startled me so horribly?"

"It was no jest, my poor old fellow," Montagu Arnold said sadly. "It is but too true. Does not her face, poor child, tell you so?"

Once more he looked at Cecil, but this

time instead of the quick glance he had given her, he looked at her steadily for a moment, and then going to her side, put his hand on her shoulder; it struck chill as ice, even through her gown.

"Are you a party to this jest, you poor, foolish Cecil?" he said huskily. "Did you think I would believe it because he said so? Did you want to try your power over me? Did——"

Their eyes had met and his voice failed him; he stood looking down at her with his hand resting on her shoulder, in silence; in her face at that moment he read the truth.

All its marble immobility, its frozen calm had melted; the pallid lips were quivering, the mouth trembled; the eyes were full of wild horror; one hand was clenched against her breast as hard as if she held a weapon there which had made a wound which, if it were withdrawn, would bleed to death.

His hand fell from her shoulder and sank heavily beside him; into his face had come the horror of one who looked upon crime—it was gray and livid as the face of the dead.

"Is it true?" he said—"is it true?"

Could that be Hugh Danecourt's voice, which was usually full of glad melody, of cheeriness, or of softest tenderness? Could that hoarse, harsh, muffled tone be his? It had no likeness to itself any more than the haggard, horror-stricken face looking down at Cecil had any likeness to the handsome, eager countenance, so full of pride and love, which had greeted his guests on the previous day.

The girl tried to speak, but no words came from her white lips; there was a great agony in her eyes, as they looked up into his. He laid his hand on her shoulder again, almost roughly.

"Speak," he went on in the same dreadful voice. "Look at me—answer me! Is it not a lie, a hideous falsehood, or some ghastly horrible jest? Tell me that you are not what he says! Cecil, it is impossible that you, whom I loved so well, can be——"

She found voice now.

"No, I am not that," she said huskily—"I am not that; for I am innocent! But it is——"

Her voice and strength failed her, her head dropped on her breast, she sank on her knees at his feet.

He was answered. That sudden breakdown, that attitude of intense humiliation, were enough. He turned from her without a word, groping with his outstretched hand like a man stricken with blindness.

Instantly Montagu Arnold was by his side. There was a chair near, which he pushed hastily forward; Sir Hugh sank into it heavily and covered his face with his hands.

There was silence again for a space. The sun had set behind the western hills, leaving a dull, red glow, which was slowly fading from the sky. The gray shades of evening were creeping over the grounds and into the quiet room.

Outside the rain was falling lightly and at intervals; a gardener was crossing the lawn from the green-houses with a great bunch of hothouse flowers in his hand. He was the only living thing in sight, all else was quiet, and still, and peaceful.

Presently Sir Hugh uncovered his face and lifted his head; there was no trace of color upon his face, it was white, and haggard, and drawn.

The passage of years could hardly have changed him as those few minutes of agony had done; there was a strange, bewildered look in his eyes, a strange uncertainty in his voice when he spoke.

"Montagu," he said.

The young barrister was standing near him, he put his hand kindly on his shoulder.

"I am here, old fellow," he said sadly.

Sir Hugh glanced at him for a moment, then at the crouching white figure at his feet—the bowed, beautiful head of the woman he loved.

"I can hear you now," he said quietly. "At first it was hard to realize, to believe, that I could not do it; but I know that you have spoken the truth, that I have been most cruelly deceived. I must know all now."

He had not looked at Cecil after the first glance, he kept his eyes averted from her and fixed upon his friend; the girl did not move, she was as still as if life had left her limbs forever.

"It is not for me to tell you the story, Hugh," said Montagu Arnold gently. "At least not for me to tell it all. If I could spare you, if I could spare her the pain of confession, old friend, I would do it for her sake and yours. I can spare you a little, perhaps, and I can spare her, too, in some small degree. But although she has deceived you, Hugh, although she has seemed cruel, it was at much cost to herself; she has suffered deeply, she has more to suffer. Let me, your friend and her enemy, bespeak your pity for her."

The low, grave tones faltered as he concluded; he believed Cecil to be a guilty woman, but he knew her to be a most unhappy one.

"You need not," said Sir Hugh unsteadily, holding out his hand to his friend, who felt how the trembling fingers closed over his with a grateful clasp. "I have loved her—I love her. If she be the most guilty woman under Heaven, I cannot but pity her."

His voice was shaken with deepest emotion; there was no anger on his face; only suffering.

As she knelt there, the words reached her; she crept a little nearer to him where he sat, but she did not touch him, nor did she raise her head.

He looked down at the beautiful golden head which had lain upon his breast, and a spasm of pain crossed his face; then he turned his eyes from her to his friend, and waited for him to speak.

Involuntarily as he looked downward, Montagu Arnold—unpoetical, matter-of-fact lawyer as he was—was reminded of those lines in which Tennyson describes how the guilty queen waited for the coming of the stainless king, against whom she had so deeply sinned.

It seemed to him that Sir Hugh, with his grave, proud face so full of anguish and of pity, and so beautiful even in its anguish, would have made no unworthy portraiture of that ideal sovereign of the Table Round, while she—

"Grovelled with her face against the floor,
There with her milk-white arms and shadowy hair,
She made herself a darkness from the King!"

"One minute," Sir Hugh interposed as the other was about to speak. "Why did you not tell me at once, Monty?"

"She begged me not," answered the barrister sadly. "And she has suffered so much, she has so much to suffer, that I yielded. We hardly knew whether it were best to tell you or to keep silence. You forced the confession from us this afternoon, Hugh."

"But you would not have let me remain in ignorance?" Sir Hugh exclaimed in horror.

"Oh, no; oh, no; but we had thought to keep silence until——"

"Until?" queried Sir Hugh.

"Until she had gone away."

"Ah!"

The exclamation broke from the Squire as if involuntarily, and as if involuntarily, also, he stretched out his hand towards the bowed head at his knee, but he drew it back without touching her. There was something so pathetic in the little gesture that Montagu Arnold felt an unwonted moisture dim his eyes.

"She meant to go away, then?" the young squire said hoarsely.

"I think she did not know what to do," Arnold answered unsteadily. "She wished only to do what would make it easiest for you; yet she feels, and I feel, Hugh, my poor old fellow, that nothing can make it anything but terrible to you."

Sir Hugh's face was drawn with pain as he turned it to his friend.

"Go on," he said quietly. "I know so much now, that I must know the rest."

CHAPTER XXIII.

"YOU will not remember the case," Montagu Arnold said, after a minute's hesitation; "at least you know nothing of its minor details. It was one which, occurring in any large city, would have caused a world-wide sensation, but which in the small assize town in which the trial took place, caused little excitement save in the immediate neighborhood of the insignificant Welsh town where it was held.

"The man who met his death in so mysterious a manner, was a man of wealth and station, Henry Beaumont, of Beaumont Hall, near one of our large manufacturing towns; the woman, or rather girl, who was accused of administering the poison which caused his death, was his wife, the unhappy woman whom you have known and loved as Cecil Lestrange."

A slight shudder shook Sir Hugh's stalwart form; it was impossible that he should have grown paler than he already was, but it seemed to his friend, who looked at him with such anxious tenderness, that the shadow of pain deepened with every passing moment.

The barrister went on. There was no need for thought, he recalled only too well every detail of the trial of which he spoke; it seemed to him that the whole thing was present before him now; the crowded, ill-lighted, badly-ventilated court-house; the slender, black-clad figure, upon which all eyes were turned, the masses of golden hair braided round the beautiful little head; the judge's grave face; the eager, attentive looks of the barristers in wigs and gowns; the absorbed faces of the spectators waiting to see a woman tried for her life.

Montagu Arnold's voice was unsteady as he continued:

"He had married her when she was little more than a child, and had loved her, as the evidence seemed to show, with a selfish yet passionate and most jealous love. He took her fresh from a foreign boarding school and placed her at the head of his stately house, gave her wealth beyond her wildest expectations, and took pride in the great beauty which raised himself in the opinion of his friends. It was no wonder the young child's head was almost turned by the homage and adulation she received, she was so young and so beautiful.

"At first he seemed to enjoy her triumphs, to be proud of her beauty, but after a time, whether prompted by evil counsellors or not, I cannot tell, he conceived a great jealousy of her, jealousy for which, as was amply proven, he had no grounds whatever. He took her away from the stately home he had given her, from the acquaintances with which he had surrounded her, from the gaiety in which her youth delighted, and brought her to a lonely, desolate house in the Welsh hills, where she had no society, no friends, nothing to wean her thoughts from the wreck of her life which she had made when she married Henry Beaumont."

There was a silence. Sir Hugh's face had softened into pity, as his eyes rested on the bowed figure crouching at his feet; some of the strained horror and anguish had faded from his features, but he was very pale still.

Cecil had not moved; crouching there in her attitude of intense humiliation, she listened in silence to Arnold's gravely-spoken words.

"She was very unhappy," he continued, pitifully. "Even those who thought her guilty could not but pity her. Her husband, the man who had sworn to love and cherish her, who was so much her senior that his affection might have partaken of the tenderness of a father as well as the passion of a lover, treated her with almost unvarying harshness and—and cruelty. More than once he had struck her."

"The dastard!" Sir Hugh exclaimed passionately, half rising to his feet. "The cowardly brute! My poor Cecil!"

The last three words were spoken in a low tone, full of tenderest pity. Montagu Arnold as he heard them, wondered if Cecil had done so, too; if she did she made no sign; she knelt there motionless and silent.

Once more Sir Hugh stretched out his hand, but this time it was not withdrawn; it rested softly, lightly, with infinite pity, infinite tenderness on her head.

"There was no excuse for him," the barrister continued. "Had she been the most faithless of wives, his conduct would have been cruel; as it was, no fault was brought against her, even by those who were boldest in asserting her guilt. That she was miserable, desolate, almost heart-broken, was certain. She had not a friend in her own household, for her husband was an absolute tyrannical man whose generosity and liberality bought him faithful service, and whose tyranny prevented any of the servants showing any sympathy for their young mistress. The evidence showed that after the first passionate rebellion against his cruelty, the poor girl sunk into a listless, miserable apathy, very sad to witness, which alternated with fits of passionate despair.

"Matters were in this stage," continued Arnold, "when one morning the nearest surgeon was summoned in hot haste to the Glen House, where he found its master lying dead; he had died suddenly at breakfast with his wife, and the cause of death was poison!"

"Poison!"

The word fell from Sir Hugh's lips almost mechanically. The story he had heard would have been a sad one, even to an uninterested hearer, how much sadder was it to him who loved Cecil Lestrange with so great a love?

Simply as Arnold had spoken, sparingly as he had touched on the miserable history, anxious as he had been to spare Sir Hugh, he had yet put before him vividly the wretchedness of the young wife; the depth of her despair.

As he had listened, Hugh Danecourt, had seen in their true light much that had puzzled and distressed him in Cecil during their brief engagement—the intense sadness which had so often held her, the tenderness alternating with coldness, which he had been sometimes tempted to think were the result of want of love. She had deceived him cruelly, but he loved her well enough to forgive that deceit.

The first suddenness of the shock was over; it had stunned him for the moment, but he could face it now; the pain was not over—that was impossible.

That the woman he had placed on so lofty a pedestal whom he had deemed so pure, and sweet, and good, should have so fallen, would always be a cruel blow to him; but his love was great enough even to survive so hard a test.

"From the first, the surgeon had no doubt had whatever as to the cause of death," Arnold went on; "but the post mortem examinatoin was conclusive. Suspicion seemed to point only to one person, to the wife whom he had treated so unjustly, and who was so great a gainer by his death; who gained by it not liberty only, but great wealth. The coroner's jury brought a verdict against her; she was tried, and——"

"Acquitted?"

"Yes, acquitted; but——"

"But——" Sir Hugh asked breathlessly.

"Acquitted only because there was not sufficient evidence to prove her guilt!" said Arnold reluctantly.

"You were in that trial?"

"Yes; I was junior counsel."

"For her?"

"No; against her."

"And you thought her guilty?" Sir Hugh asked.

"Yes,"—slowly and reluctantly the answer came—"I thought her guilty."

A short silence followed the gravely-spoken words; the twilight had faded into evening while Montagu Arnold had told his story, the dusk was filling the quiet room, the rain had ceased; outside all was still and gray and peaceful.

Sir Hugh stooped over the crouching form at his feet, and gently, with an infinite tenderness of touch and gesture, lifted the bowed head and disclosed the white face.

Surely no face so young and so lovely had ever worn the imprint of so terrible an anguish as that which looked at him out of the beautiful lustrous eyes, which shone with so wild a light in the little death-like face.

"Cecil," Sir Hugh said gently, looking down at her in the dim light, with a great pity, a great tenderness in his gaze, "you can hear me?"

The white lips parted, but although no sound came they formed the word—

"Yes."

"This story which I have heard, is it a true one?"

Again the voiceless affirmative answered him.

"You were this man's—Henry Beaumont's—wife?"

No answer came save the deepening of the anguish in the gray eyes.

With unfailing tenderness he looked down at he, holding her face between his strong hands.

"You deceived me, Cecil?"

Her eyes, which had been looking upwards into his, fell; she made a feeble little movement as if to release herself from his clasp, but the steady, tender hold did not relax.

"You have deceived me," he repeated, "but still I love you, and I will believe your word."

Tenderly, yet with a strength she could not resist, he lifted her to her feet, supporting her with his arm or she would have fallen. With the other hand he softly put away the loose hair which had fallen over her face, looking at her in silence, with a tenderness which made Montagu Arnold's eyes fill with unaccustomed tears as he watched it, and thought what a noble heart Cecil had deceived, what a great love she had lost.

But had she lost it?

There was no lack of love in the eyes looking down into hers, there was no lack of love in the tones in which presently he addressed her.

"Cecil," he said very gently, with an unspeakable pathos in the sad tenderness of his deep, musical voice, "I think I may trust you. Dear, tell me all the truth now, for our love's sake. You were cruelly used, you were most unhappy, the temptation to win your freedom was a great one doubtless. Did you ever yield to it, Cecil? Were you guilty of that man's death?"

She gently disengaged herself; a moment before she could not have stood alone, now she was strong in her innocence of the crime which yet had blighted her life, which had sent her forth to the world a branded woman; she looked at him un-

flinchingly, with great steady eyes, miserable indeed, but with the light of truth in them.

"As Heaven sees me,—No!" she said steadily. "I am guilty towards you, Hugh, with a great guilt; but I never injured him. I am as innocent of his death as you yourself can be."

A great light of joy shone in his face as he heard the words; there was not a moment's doubt in his mind. He caught the trembling creature in his strong arms, and hid her face upon his breast as he bent his head over hers.

"My darling, my poor, wronged darling!" he whispered in tones of softest tenderness.

And without a word or sign to remind them of his presence, Montagu Arnold turned quietly away and passed out silently into the still, gray evening, leaving them alone together.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CECIL!" A quarter of an hour elapsed after Montagu Arnold had left the room before the silence was broken by anything save Cecil's sobs.

At the tender words, so full of sympathy, with which Hugh had drawn her to his breast, she had broken into a very agony of tears, low, faint sobs—faint, yet intense which shook her from head to foot; tears rained from her eyes, which yet relieved in some measure the pent-up anguish of the terrible strain she had undergone.

Hugh Danecourt knew that her agony must have its way, that it was better that it should, that the tears were the natural relief, and were less terrible than that awful, fixed look of stony despair which had been on her face when he lifted her in his strong, tender hands.

It was only when the sobs seemed to be dying away from sheer exhaustion, and the slender figure rested against him with the dead weight of utter weakness that he spoke to her, bending his tall head low over hers as it lay upon his breast.

"Cecil," he whispered gently, "you are distressing me terribly."

The words roused her as nothing else could have done. She had caused him so much pain already that she could not bear to add to it. She raised her head, choking back her sobs with a desperate effort, and strove gently to disengage herself from his arms. But he held her fast.

"You are not going now," he said, "you cannot leave me yet, Cecil?"

"How can you bear the sight of me?" she said faintly. "Oh, Hugh, put me away from you, I am so unworthy. You know it now. Put me away from you, and ——"

"So unworthy," he repeated tenderly. "And yet I love you, Cecil. Dear, why did you not trust me? It would have saved us both much suffering."

"How could I?" she cried wildly. "How could I? I had not strength. I tried more than once, but I could not! Oh, let me tell you now, before you leave me for always, a little of my suffering. It has been terrible, Hugh, and its bitterest anguish was the thought of your pain."

"I know that, my poor child," he said sadly. "Your love for me was greater than your trust, in me, Cecil. Had you so little faith in my love for you?"

"How could I hope that you would forgive?" she said faintly. "How could I hope that you would believe me innocent when they all thought me guilty. Ah, if you knew how often, in the long sleepless nights, I used to see your face change, and grow hard and stern and cold, and the love die out of your eyes! If you knew how I hated myself for my base treachery towards you! Even in my happiest moments—yes, even *I* was happy sometimes—the thought that I had won your love by a fraud, by a lie, was always with me. I had only one hope, Hugh, only one hope that——"

"That," he queried softly.

"That I might die before you knew" she answered, looking up at him with shining eyes full of feverish pain. "They had told me that I could not live very long, that ——"

"Who had told you, dear?" the young man said softly, looking with a new fear at the white face upraised to his, the little hands, so frail, lying on his breast."

"The doctors. Oh, Hugh, don't look sorry; that thought has been my greatest consolation."

"I think you can hardly know how you pain me, Cecil," he said in a low tone of pain. "Do you forget that I love you?"

"Then, because you love me, you should be glad," she said. "Think of what my life has been, think of what it must be again, and you will be glad to think that soon I shall be at rest."

"Can I not atone to you for the cruel past, dearest child?" his voice unsteady and shaken. "As my wife, Cecil, could I not teach you to forget?"

Her eyes looked up to his with a sudden wondering light of admiration.

"You would make me your wife still?" she said.

"Why not, dear? You tell me you are innocent, and I believe you. Is not that enough?"

The wondering light deepened, the pale lips began to tremble, her head sank forward on his breast again, she had no words to thank him for the great love which was willing to overlook even so shameful a past as hers.

She had doubted his love, she had deemed her own more generous, she had said to herself that in his place she forgive, but that his tenderness was great enough to do so, she had never dreamed. She knew it now, and the knowledge added terribly to her remorse.

And he, holding the frail, shivering form to his heart, had lost all thought of her guilt in this new fear which had come upon him—that she had not long to live! How was it, he asked himself, in an agony of pain, that he had never before noticed how frail and delicate she was? How bright the large eyes were? How any exertion tired her? How deep the shadows under her eyes were? How transparent the little, white, thin hands?

Looking down at her in the light of her past, he could see clearly that what she had suffered had not left her body unhurt any more than it had left her soul untouched.

He knew but little of her past, he thought, yet, in that little, what suffering had been contained! That awful ordeal of the trial was enough to have brought her to the door of death without previous suffering. His poor Cecil! He drew her closer to his throbbing heart.

"When did they tell you so, dear?" he asked gently.

She looked up vacantly. She was so used to the thought, which to him was so new and terrible, that she had already forgotten.

"Tell me what, Hugh?" she asked faintly.

"That you were not very strong, dear."

"When I was ill," she answered negligently. "After the—the trial, I was very ill, Hugh, and although I recovered from that illness—ah! how sorry I was when they said I should get better—they told me that I should not be a long-lived woman, that there was something wrong with my heart! As if I needed telling," she added, with a faint, bitter laugh; "I knew it was broken long ago!"

"But you are better, you are stronger now; you only want to be happy to get quite strong again," he said eagerly. "And I will make you so happy, my own, that you cannot fail to get strong."

"You forget," she whispered tremulously, "you are talking as if I were not the guilty creature I am, guilty of the cruelest deception towards you, if not of that other scarcely greater crime. Every kind word you speak to me, every look of love from your eyes, seems to hurt like a knife cutting into my heart, Hugh. Oh, my darling, think what a wretch I am, how unworthy to be the wife of any honest man, how utterly unfit to enter your house!"

"I am the best judged of that," he answered gently. "Because you have been accused of a crime of which even your accusers could not convict you is no reason why I should consider you unfit to be my wife."

"You do not know, you do not know," she said, shaking her head wearily, as it rested against his shoulder.

"Then tell me, darling," he urged eagerly—"tell me all about it, and let us see if we cannot do something to clear your name from the stain. You are not alone now, dear, as you seem to have been then."

"As I was then," she answered, "I had not even Laura. Ah! surely there was no more helpless, lonely creature under Heaven than I was then."

"Come then, dear; you are no longer lonely," he said, forcing a smile. "Sit down here with me, and tell me this sorrowful story."

He led her to the sofa; but when he would have seated her beside him, she slid down on her knees and laid her clasped hands upon his knee.

"Let me tell you here," she said faintly. "Here at your feet—it is my fittest place."

He would have raised her, but she resisted him, and seeing that she wished it, he yielded. But he kept her hand in his, and the firm yet tender pressure of his strong fingers over hers seemed to give her strength.

Steadying her voice by a great effort, of which her weakness would hardly have been thought capable—she was so anxious, poor woman, to spare him any unnecessary distress—she began the story of the sad young life, so closely knit to his own.

"When you heard, a little while ago," she said, "what is known of my story, you were told that I was little more than a child when I married; but in that utterance is evident the generosity which characterised the whole recital—a generosity all the greater when one thinks that the speaker believed me guilty of the crime for which he saw me tried. I was not a child—I was a woman. At nineteen I was older in some things than women ten years my senior.

"I had learnt the bitterness of poverty and obscurity; I had seen my mother fall under a burden by far too heavy for her to bear; I had seen my sister downtrodden, and overlooked, and insulted because the beauty of the young pupil-teacher was so much greater than that of her more fortunate companions. You know our early history, Hugh. What I told you of my life at Bruges is all true.

"I was nineteen when I joined Laura and her husband in India, and I had, at that time, no higher ambition than to barter my beauty to the highest bidder, to win wealth at any price. There is only one way in which a woman can get rich, and that way I took. I was beautiful, I sold my beauty, and Henry Beaumont bought it.

"He was many years my senior, but he was a man who might easily have won a woman's love if he had tried. But from the earliest days of our wedded life there was no sympathy between us; he was proud of me, of my beauty, but I think he never loved me.

"We had returned to England immediately after the marriage, and it was his will that I should become the fashion. He was most generous, almost lavish in his gifts, and at first I was almost happy. I forgot the humiliating bargain I had made, I forgot that I had sold myself and my beauty in the same manner as, but for a higher price, than——"

His fingers touched her quivering lips to silence them, her head sank forward and rested against his knee in utter humiliation. Some few minutes elapsed before she could continue.

"Even during that time I was not at peace," she went unsteadily; "I dressed, I danced, I scattered the money he gave me in all directions; I was pleased to see my name in the society papers as the most beautiful woman at a ball or an assembly; I was proud of being admired, but after awhile that came to an end. I grew weary of the gaiety, the dissipation; I saw the unworthiness of my life, I grew to hate myself; I tried to draw nearer to my husband, to be a better wife, but he misunderstood me cruelly. Either he misunderstood me because he could not help doing so, or he was induced to do so by misrepresentoins. I had no power over him, but there was one who had, and she hated me.

"Mr. Beaumont's mother had died shortly before our marriage, and she had left to her son's care a girl, whom she had adopted as a child, and who had lived with her as companion, almost as a daughter. When he brought me home, it was she who welcomed me with apparent cordiality. At my husband's suggestion she remained with us. She was some years my senior, and better able to manage a great household than I was. Heaven forgive me, if I wrong her, but I have thought since that but for her all might have been so different."

"What was her name, Cecil?" Sir Hugh asked gently, as she paused.

"Hester Brand. She was very beautiful, too, but very strange sometimes, so cold, and proud, and indifferent. She went into no society; sometimes she appeared at our balls, but very seldom. She would never be friends with me. I was her mistress, she would say, there could be no intimacy between us. I treated her always as he did, as my equal.

"From the first she hated me—from the first she watched my every action with distrust; and it was she who made my husband——"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE ART OF HAPPINESS.—If you would be happy, try to be cheerful, even when misfortune assails you. You will soon find that there is a pleasant aspect to nearly all circumstances—to even the ordinary trials of life. When the hour of misfortune comes, whether it appears in the form of disease or pecuniary loss, face it manfully and make the most of it.

NEVER think you can make yourself great by making another less.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE CAMEL.—As a matter of fact, and in spite of its having carried Mahomet in four leaps from Jerusalem to Mecca, seven miles an hour is the camel's pace; nor can it maintain this rate over two hours. Its usual speed is about five miles an hour—a slow pace, beyond which it is dangerous to urge them, lest, as Asiatics say, they might break their hearts and die literally on the spot. When a camel is pressed beyond this speed, and is spent, it kneels down, and not all the wolves in Asia will make it budge again. The camel remains where it kneels, and where it kneels it dies. A fire under its nose is useless.

UNDER THE EQUATOR.—A native missionary of the Gold Coast Mission, Africa, recently visited the hill country of Bocso where he says the temperature is cool, rains are frequent and streams numerous. The country is thinly peopled by a population subject to goitre and extremely dirty. Children and bachelors wear no clothing. The fetich worship is less subtle than on the coast, but the poison ordeal is frequently resorted to. When a person dies a whole village sometimes submits to take an infusion of a poisonous bark. Quarrels are settled by resorting to the same dangerous arbiter. Thefts are discovered by it, babies who cry much are made to swallow the infusion to prevent their growing up wicked, and parents who lose several children in succession take it order that the cause of their affliction may be discovered.

THE WHITE ANT.—The white ant is the most dreaded of insect invaders. In Africa their houses are dome-shaped mounds 18 feet high. These insects erect pyramids 1000 times higher than themselves. The ants on their travels so conceal their approach that their presence is not suspected until the damage is done. They usually tunnel into any object which they attack, often reducing it to a mere shell. In this way they have been known to ascend within the leg of a table, devour the contents of a box upon it, and descend through a tunnel bored in another leg, all in one night. An officer of the English army while calling upon some ladies in Ceylon was startled by a rumbling sound. The ladies started with affright, and the next instant they stood with only sky above them; the roof had fallen in and lay all about, leaving them miraculously unharmed. The ants had made their way up through the beams, hollowing them out until a great part of the frame-work of the house was ready to fall at the slightest shock.

SAVAGE CUSTOMS.—It has been remarked that savage nations frequently imprint on their salutations the disposition of their character. The Siamese, if desirous of testifying to the sincerity of their friendship, scratch their hand, and in turn suck a drop of blood from the wound. The Franks, too, are accustomed to tear the hair from their head, and present it to the person they salute. Amongst further salutations in use in different parts of the world, we read that in Japan it is customary for the inferior of two persons saluting to take off his sandals, put his right hand into his left sleeve, and, passing the person with his short, measured steps, exclaim, with an expression of fear on his countenance, "Do not hurt me!" In Morocco foreigners are saluted by the Moors on horseback, in a most extraordinary fashion. It seems that the Moor rides full speed towards the stranger, as if with the intention of running him down; he then suddenly stops and discharges his pistol over his head.

A TURKISH JEST-BOOK.—A work entitled "Nasir Eddin" was published some fifty years ago in Constantinople. It is a kind of jest-book, and contains many amusing things. The following jokes were translated from it at the time of its publication: One of his neighbors went to Nasir Eddin and solicited the loan of a rope. The Khojah went into his house, and, after a delay of several minutes, returned and told the borrower that the rope was in use tying up the flour. "What do you mean?" said the neighbor. "How can a rope be used to bind up flour?"—"A rope may be applied to any use if I do not wish to lend it," he replied. A man once came to the Khojah, saying, "Effendi, I have great need of an ass to-day; lend me yours?" "I have not an ass here," was the answer. At the same moment the animal began to bray in the stable near by. "He?" said the man, "do I not hear your ass braying?" "What!" exclaimed the Khojah, "would you take the word of an ass in preference to mine?"

SIMPLICITY of character is the natural result of profound thoughts.

TOGETHER.

BY DAVINA MACKIE.

One summer day we two set sail,
My little love and I,
And, careless in our happy glee,
We passed the meadows by.

To seek a land where ne'er a shade
Upon our path was cast,
Where rainy days and wintry days
Were things but of the past.

And still we floated on and on,
This fairyland to find,
Where happiness should rule the day
And everything be kind;

But ever when we reached a spot
Which seemed so bright from far,
Then surely was some shadow there
Its sunniness to mar.

At last, in words so soft and low,
My love, she whispered me,
"Ah, sweetheart, if there were no shade,
Our love would withered be.

For close together we are drawn
To comfort one another
In darksome days, that we may be
True helpmeets to each other."

clasped her loving hand in mine,
Adown the stream we went;
And aye, since then, whate'er betide,
We've ever been content.

The shadows fall, the sun shines bright;
Sometimes 'tis wintry weather;
But we are calmly sailing on,
My love and I together.

A FLOWER OF FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WILD WARRINGTONS," "LIKE LOST SHEEP," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A FEW words engraven upon the smooth centre of the marble told one that the tablet had been placed there by a grieving mother, whose love and sorrow in this world would never die.

"To the ever-dear memory," it said simply, "of Flower, the only child of Marion Eversleigh."

And then was recorded the age of the beloved lost little one.

"Two years and six months old"—that was all; no more!

How pathetic was the story, I used to think insensibly, staring upward with pensive dreaming eyes at that oval tablet upon the wall—strange dim musings sometimes oozing to me unawares. How pathetic, how brief, and how cruel!

Opposite to the tall Redknights pew there was in the chancel another in every way similar to it—dingy with its dusky carved oak, faded crimson curtains, and a narrow door that opened and shut with a sharp click.

I had never thought to inquire to whom the pew opposite to the Redknights pew belonged; for hitherto I had never seen it occupied by anybody.

But on this particular Sunday morning a young man strolled into the church quite late.

The congregation at the time were standing.

The psalms were being read—they did not chant them at Hazel—the stranger, as I at first took him to be, advanced coolly to the east end of the church and entered the big empty pew facing us.

Before he could in any manner notice me, I had sat down suddenly but quietly, and arose no more, thus keeping myself hidden from view during the remainder of the service.

When at last the late-comer and I had seen and had spoken to each other, it had been on the memorable occasion of Mrs. Runge's party at Tiungate—when he had known me as the wife of Daryl Darkwood.

For the young man was no other than the whilom bachelor-friend of Viscount Tracy—the Priory family, I learned afterwards, had been for some weeks absent from home—young Marc Gaveston, of Gaveston Priory!

I did not quit the little church that morning until the amiable old Rector himself, the congregation, the snuffy old woman who looked after the pews, and the smart country damsel who played the harmonium, had one and all of them departed; and I very nearly got locked in for my pains.

It was for the most part a simple rustic flock, conspicuous for its new corduroy and clean smock-frocks.

The good folk, in friendly groups of twos and threes, and chatting as they went in a buxom language of their own, had soon straggled off to their different homes.

The pleasant shady high-road beyond the low churchyard gates were ere long clear of them all, with the thrice-blest calm, that sweet-breathing stillness peculiar, I think, to a summer Sabbath-day in the country, reigning everywhere around.

And after that Sunday morning—when fortunately I had gone to Hazel church unaccompanied by Mrs. Jessamy—I never again ventured, at least as Frances Deane, without the lodge gates of Redknights unless I wore a veil.

* * * * * *

In this manner the late summer passed away; and early autumn, with its low-lying morning mists and its "silent, melancholy afternoons," followed apace.

Fallen leaves, wondrously diversified in orange, red, yellow, green, and brown, had begun thickly to strew the moist narrow paths in copse and wood alike, and in the valleys too between them.

The tangled bracken also had lost its lovely green; and, now trailing earthward amongst the thorny black brambles, it had taken a speckled-saffron tint which occasionally, in the low hazy splendor of the afternoon sun, would change to a fitful pale gold.

Gloriously beautiful indeed to the eye were the wooded hills which shut in Redknights—glowing, flaming for a while in their dazzling vesture ere the shrieking autumn winds and the desolating autumn rains swept over them and ruthlessly stripped them bare.

And down in the cypress-shadowed hollow, where the river rushed onward—perpetually onward—the water was browner and more torbid than ever.

Its banks were dangerous and slippery beneath the tufted grass.

The sedge had been already nipped by an early frost; and the dipping reeds and the gray elder-boughs together whispered there like living things when the ghostly chill twilight crept over the place and banished from it the light of day.

During the past month or so—and by this time my dark hair had grown long and luxuriant again, and I had discarded for ever my pretty jaunty caps—I had received many another letter from my friend Aurora.

The Tracys were now at Tangier, where they talked of spending the winter; and twice, and twice only, since I had been living at Redknights had I heard from Mr. Eversleigh.

They were sensible, manly letters that any generous-natured brother—had I been blest with one—might have written to me; and how thoroughly welcome they were, when they did come, it is hardly necessary to record.

The first of the two had borne the indistinct postmark of some outlandishly christened "city" of the Far West, the name of which, until I had opened the envelope, I was wholly unable to make out. The second had come to me dated from San Francisco.

In both letters Leigh asked the same question—nay, questions.

What was I doing? What had I done? Was I happy? Had I prospered—and was Daryl forgiven?

Yet to neither of these kindly-penned epistles was it possible to send a reply; for the plans and the movements of the far-away writer were apparently of the most uncertain character.

He was in one place on one day, it seemed, and in another on the next.

Very shortly, Leigh added in a postscript to the second letter, he was, he hoped, coming back to England.

Absolutely welcome as were these letters of Mr. Eversleigh's, I nevertheless believe that I was secretly thankful that no reply to either of them was expected.

Had I written in answer, what could I have said? Ah me, what? What had I done? Leigh asked simply.

What was I doing? Nothing. That was, in brief, the only true answer I could have given him; for was I not still tugging myself, still selfishly and indolently rejecting, so to say, in my newly-found interests, in my new and calmly happy life at Redknights, whilst Daryl himself, yet an outcast and unforgiven, was an exile from the dear old home?

Was I not something of a usurper as well as an impostor?

I sometimes found myself vaguely wondering—chiefly perhaps when lying wakeful in the stilly hours of the black and lonesome night, when the great house was as hushed as the grave, and the ticking of a clock or the scratching and tapping of dry creeper leaves upon the window-panes alone disturbed the heavy silence.

I, at Redknights, was warmly housed, safely sheltered, happy and contented withal; whilst Daryl, the rightful heir, banished, unpardoned—where was he? What might not be his evil fate, whether upon English soil or upon a foreign shore?

Who indeed could tell?

Howbeit, I thrust from me resolutely all apprehension of the future—would not think of it—smothered as best I could the admonishing whisper of conscience—and thus lived only in and for the present, and for the tranquil joy it afforded me.

One late October afternoon, when the sun, framed in a sullen gray sky, looked, through a moist dark network of leafless trees, like a ball of dull red fire, I walked into Hazel as far as the village draper's.

There was a rawness in the misty atmosphere, and the lanes and roads were somewhat muddy; therefore dear Mrs. Eversleigh preferred to remain at home by the fireside.

The draper's shop was a stuffy little establishment crammed with all sorts of useful articles in a small way, and was kept by a sharp-featured spinster named Robinson, whose age and whose temper, said Hazel behind her back, were alike doubtful.

Hazel, all the same, was unable to get along without Miss Robinson and her delightfully various stock-in-trade—the village being situated some four or five miles "from everywhere," as the natives said—and Miss Robinson herself was quite aware of the fact; so that, if at any time she did not "feel civil" towards a customer, she saw no reason why she should try to appear so.

And Miss Robinson could be dreadfully snappish when she chose.

Upon one side of the draper's shop, adjoining it, there stood a public-house, quaintly called "The Willing Hand;" upon the other side of it was the post-office, which was also kept by Miss Robinson.

But here a pleasant chatty orphan niece of hers was at the head of postal affairs.

The letter-bag was brought to Redknights but once a day—in the early morning; and at seven o'clock every evening the postman called for it at the lodge gates to take it back, with letters—if there were any to go—to the Hazel postmistress, blowing a horn as he tramped along the road to let the lodge-keeper know that he was approaching the park entrance.

But, if during the day it so happened that I walked into the village, or drove thither in the carriage with Mrs. Eversleigh, I rarely omitted to call at the queer little low-ceiled post-office, to inquire of Miss Robinson's niece whether any letters had arrived for us since the morning.

Having got what I wanted—merely a small parcel or two—of sour, sharp-nosed Miss Robinson, I stepped into the next doorway and down its three steep narrow stairs to speak to her more amiable relative.

Yes, said Miss Robinson's niece pleasantly, she believed that there was one letter for Redknights, and only one, that afternoon.

It had arrived by the mid-day post; and I should like to take it back with me, of course, should I not?

"Ah," added she, gingerly picking out, as she chatted on, the Redknights letter from amongst a few others that were in a rack in a corner of the little dark shop—"I see it is for you, Mrs. Deane! The weather is really getting quite wintry, ma'm, is it not?" said Miss Robinson's niece, with a smile, handing the letter to me across the counter.

I agreed that the weather was both moist and chilly, in every way reminding one of the approach of winter, and hurriedly quitted the post-office—my heart thumping fast, the color in my face coming and going, I could feel.

At a first swift glance at the envelope I had recognized Leigh Eversleigh's handwriting.

A second was sufficient to tell me that the letter was no American one.

So he had returned—was at home—he was then in England! What had he to say to me?

I walked quickly, nearly ran, until the pretty old straggling village was left far behind me and out of sight; and then, as not a soul save myself or a vehicle of any kind was at that moment visible upon the always somewhat lonely Hazel road, I raised my veil and broke the seal of my letter.

It was rapidly growing dusk. The dull red sun had now almost entirely disappeared.

The group of gaunt bare trees behind which he had so sullenly gone down looked black and stark in the hazy lurid glow that there touched the evening sky.

But it was not yet so dark that I was hindered in reading my letter.

The red-and-primrose light from the angry west enabled me to decipher it from the first word to the last.

The desolate country road was damp, cold, and very still.

The plaintive "tweet, tweet" of some shivering solitary bird in the hedge fell just then upon the raw and silent air.

Scarcely breathing in my excitement, I stood still there upon the road-side, with the opened letter held close to my wide and half-fearful eyes.

Kind Heaven above me, of all places upon the face of the earth, it had been written at, was dated from, an hotel, "The Raven," at Stonyhampton!

* * * * * *

The wind had risen with an eerie sound, crying and wailing around the outer walls of Redknights, like an unearthly voice uplifted in wildest lamentation.

Sweeping downward from the hills, and shrieking through the stripped brown woods, it drove the bleak raindrops and stray dead leaves before it and dashed them against the windows of the warm white drawing-room.

At intervals the rain smote the panes like hail; whilst the wind itself sobbed and roared alternately within the hollow thrust of the spacious chimney.

Upon one side of the wide, white hearthplace I, for a wonder, was sitting idle; upon the other, in a low easy-chair, and with the glow of a shaded reading-lamp falling softly in a ruby halo around her, sat Mrs. Eversleigh, apparently much interested in a new book.

The old Squire, her father, was this evening too poorly, and in reality too tiresome, to be suffered to join us as usual for music in the white drawing-room. Buckle was, therefore, enduring—well, I suppose only Heaven and he, Buckle himself, knew what up-stairs.

With a slight start, and with an expression of faint astonishment upon her sweet, wan face, Marion Eversleigh looked up presently.

"Frances," she said, "is it rain that I hear? The sun, I noticed, set so redly, I should imagine it was hardly possible."

I knew—for I had for some time been listening with a curious intentness, and yet barely conscious that I was actually doing so, to the eerie storm-voices outside—that it was rain; but I arose at once, if a trifle automatically, and went over to one of the windows.

The shutters were not yet fastened, and I parted the heavy, white Oriental curtains, with their glinting gold and silver thread-work, and looked out.

With my back to the lamps and the bright fire, I stood there for minutes in silence, my hot forehead pressed to the cool, dark window-glass, all rain-blurred upon the outer side.

The night, as far as one could see, was wild and black indeed, with now and then a glimpse of weird, white moon, appearing and disappearing in most ghostly fashion.

"Yes, dear Mrs. Eversleigh," I murmured at last, "it is a rough and dismal evening, hopelessly so, I fear. The sharp pattering noise that you can hear now and then is the rain against the windows."

"And after the beautiful sunset we had too!" she remarked, still in accents of gentle surprise. "Did you see it, Frances?"

"Yes," I answered restlessly. "But there was a watery primrose light also in the sky, which I fancied had a stormy look about it, especially after the angry crimson had gone."

I returned to my seat by the hearth-side, and stared thoughtfully into the fire.

"Frances," said Mrs. Eversleigh suddenly, "why such a deep sigh, my dear?"

"Did—did I sigh?" I raised my eyes, and then I perceived that Mrs. Eversleigh had put her book aside and was regarding me with a wistful, not to say an anxious gaze. My own eyes wandered to the fire again.

"Yes; and I am afraid that you are not feeling well, dear Frances—not altogether quite yourself, I mean—this evening," she said, very kindly. "Is it so?"

"Why?"—and I tried to smile.

"To speak the truth," frankly replied Mrs. Eversleigh, smiling back—"though, of course, on my part it may be sheer fancy—I have thought more than once since you came in from your walk this afternoon, that you have somehow been—well, Frances, not quite your usual self. Am I too absurd and fanciful, dear?"

"Unlike myself?" I echoed vaguely. "Have I? Perhaps I have."

"Yes—absent and restless by turns," rejoined Mrs. Eversleigh more emphatically; "silent and thoughtful one minute—bright, almost excited, the next. At dinner, do you know, though I said nothing, I once or twice felt really alarmed; you seemed to me so—so strange, Frances, so—so feverish; and you ate hardly anything, I noticed. Nothing, I trust, dear friend, is in any way wrong?" she added anxiously.

"Wrong?" I echoed again, uneasily, speaking very low. "How do you mean?"

Mrs. Eversleigh leaned towards me, and said earnestly:

"Frances, at this moment you are looking so troubled, so ill, I am convinced that in some unexpected direction or other you have been greatly worried and upset. Indeed, it has struck me as being just possible—not unlikely—that you may have called at the post-office, when in Hazel this afternoon, and, perhaps, found there a disagreeable letter awaiting you. Won't you tell me what it is? Mayn't I share the trouble with you? Mayn't I hear the bad news, dear, if there is any? I may help you, you know."

Acting upon the impulse of the moment, I started up; for a few seconds I hesitated, stood irresolute, nervously locking my hands together in a spasm of doubt and fear. Finally I dropped upon my knees by Mrs. Eversleigh's low chair.

"Frances," said she tenderly, laying her cool, fragile hand upon my head, "what is the matter?"

"Yes—yes, you are right," I said hoarsely. "I have had a letter; I found it at the post-office this afternoon. It has made me wretched, intensely wretched, and yet—and yet it has, in—in another way—made me most glad and hopeful, too! I know not what to think or—or how to act. Everything just now—I mean to-night—seems so strange, so unsettled, so threatening. My brain for the last few hours seems to have been spinning round incessantly—burning as though it were on fire. And, alas," I cried incoherently, "I have been so happy—so happy, here at Redknights——"

"And you will go on being happy with us, I fervently hope, put in Mrs. Eversleigh soothingly. "Frances, you know very well how dearly I have grown to love you; I cannot afford to lose you now! Have pity—do not hint at such a thing! Dear, it would be too cruel a wrench!"

The tears rushed straightway from my heart, and flooded my eyes to blindness.

"Oh, my own dear Mrs. Eversleigh, I know not how it will have to be!" I said brokenly. In all likelihood I shall—I shall have to go away—away from Redknights. I foresee no help for it—matters will inevitably arrange themselves——"

"No, no—not that, Frances!"

"I fear that that will prove to be my fate. Dear Mrs. Eversleigh, there are things—circumstances in my past life which I have, perhaps, wrongfully kept back from you—things—circumstances concerning myself and another that—that day after day I have tried to tell you—that by rights, I fear, you—yes, both you and the Squire—should have long ago known—should have learnt from my own lips. But I have been a coward—a pitiable coward! My cowardice has indeed been greater than I can make you comprehend; for I was well aware that confession would serve only to imperil the deep happiness I have felt in being daily near you—beneath the same roof with you; and it was too hard. And now—and now all that I have so reprehensibly kept back with regard to—to the past, is rising, like a ghost, to bewilder and affright me; and I feel powerless—wholly powerless—with no particle of strength or of will, as it were, to do present battle with the consequences of my own vacillation."

In Marion Eversleigh's own dear eyes, tears of sorrow and of sympathy were shining now; her fragile hands, flashing with their many jewels, were resting upon my bowed shoulders.

"And that troublesome letter, Frances," she whispered, "has it, then, been the cause of all this mischief—has it made you so un-

settled and so unhappy, dear?"

"Yes," I moaned. "It has awakened my conscience in such a manner that there is no hushing it again into a false slumber, a sham tranquility. The time has at last come, when the truth must be faced—and borne!"

"And yet, dear friend," she rejoined very wistfully, "you hinted, did you not, that you had received good news, as well as bad?"

Kneeling there, I laid my head upon her breast.

"Yes, right good news, I should say," I answered, in a dreamy tone; "but—but at present I have heard so little of it, I am not yet sure, you see. I shall hear more, I suppose, it—if I am here by-and-by, when—when——"

I stopped, and a shiver crept over me from head to foot.

"Yes?" put in Mrs. Eversleigh softly.

"When," I finished with an effort, "when Mr. Leigh Eversleigh comes again to Redknights."

Marion Eversleigh's wan face brightened with genuine pleasure.

"Is Leigh coming to us, then?" she exclaimed, smiling through the tears which still lingered in her eyes.

"He says so," I breathed.

"And when, Frances—when?"

"He says," I faltered in reply, trembling and fearful lest in the next moment she, in her tender, wistful way, should express the reasonable wish to see Leigh Eversleigh's letter—for was he not her own staunch friend as well as mine, and was he not moreover shortly to be her guest at Redknights? Surely she had a right to see it—"he says he may come on any day—at any hour; he may be here to-morrow, the next day, perhaps the day after. But, at all events, he will arrive as soon as—as soon as circumstances will permit him to travel down to Buckinghamshire."

In my then strained state of feverish hope and apprehension, of nervous dread and uncertainty as to the immediate future, I felt that I could endure no further conversation that night, even though my participant in it was my revered Mrs. Eversleigh. I stumbled to my feet, bent over her and kissed her, saying hurriedly, almost piteously—

"Let me go now, will you? I want to be alone—to think—to sleep if it be possible. I am utterly weary, as it is, with much thought and anxiety. I shall be far better alone, shut up in my own room."

She returned my caress as affectionately as she was wont to do when we parted from each other for the night, and insisted upon my drinking some mulled wine before I left the white drawing-room, saying gently that too much tea was the very worst thing in the world for any one in my then nervous and hysterical condition.

"And, do you know, dear Frances, I cannot help fancying," she added more lightly and hopefully, "since it appears that your correspondent is none other than our mutual friend, Leigh Eversleigh—by the way, I must speak to Mrs. Jermyn—a room had better be got in readiness for our guest without delay—that you are perhaps magnifying trifles, seeing mountains where there are molehills only, and are, I dare say, conjuring up all sorts of shadowy trouble where none in reality of any kind exists. I somehow cannot imagine bad tidings coming through Leigh Eversleigh; his presence here, the mere sight of him, has often done me good: to me, Frances, he has invariably proved a glad herald. And—and with regard, dear, to the rest—whatever it may signify, or—or even portend," said Marion Eversleigh, with a timidity of manner and a loving upward smile, which to me were very touching—"I have not the least doubt but with daylight to-morrow things—difficulties—will appear altogether different—will show themselves in a much brighter, in a far less gloomy aspect——"

"To-morrow," I interrupted drearily, "I will tell you all; to-night I cannot—I cannot. I will keep nothing back to-morrow."

So, in our little mundane way, we discuss and arrange for the morrow, mortal-like forgetting that the present only is our own, the future never—that prescience is heaven's alone.

As I kissed that beloved brow once more a swift sob choked my speech. With blind and hurried steps I left the white drawing-room, and went up to my own chamber on the second-floor. The lamps in the warm and silent corridors flickered slightly in the draught—the wind was rushing upon Redknights from the north-west.

The window of my room had been carelessly closed; and, as I opened the door of it, a cold gust met me upon the threshold and blew out the candle I carried. Then, save for the fire, which had burnt low in the grate, I was in darkness.

CHAPTER XLIV.

TRIVIAL as was this mishap which checked me upon the threshold of my own room, it nevertheless in no mean degree aggravated the nervousness and trepidation which on that night had taken such strong hold upon me and refused to be shaken off.

It was almost, thought I fearfully, as if some one had stepped noiselessly towards me from out of the thick gloom of the room, and with a swift, sudden, living breath had extinguished the candle in my hand.

Repressing a shudder, I groped my way to the table by the fireplace and found there a box of matches. Fortunately there were other candles in the room, and I quickly lighted all of them.

Then I fastened the window securely, drew down the blind right over it, flung a log or two on the dying fire, and sat down by the fireside to peruse for the twentieth time the disquieting letter I had received from Leigh Eversleigh.

How the wind growled, grew and roared upon this side of the house, now and again whirling dead twigs and leaves against the window-panes as it had whirled them against the windows of the white drawing-room down-stairs!

Occasionally would come a brief hush in the gale, when the rain seemed to be falling more gently, and when the mighty whispering sound which travelled ceaselessly through the swaying tree-tops was not unlike the hissing noise of an angry in crawling sea. The wind was then but resting—gathering new strength.

As—with the candles in their tall old silver candlesticks drawn close to my strained and fevered eyes—I once more read, from the first word to the last, Leigh Eversleigh's amazing letter, I sighed and shivered by turns.

This is how it ran—

"'The Raven Hotel, Stonyhampton.
25th October, 18—

"My dear Mrs. Darkwood—First, let me say that I am writing in great haste to let you know that I have not forgotten the promise I gave to you before I went to America. From the above address you will see that I am now in England. Barely a week ago I landed at Liverpool; and, as soon as I could make it possible, after a day or so unavoidably spent in town, I journeyed hither to Stonyhampton. Good news—take courage—have no fear! I have been to Moor Edge, I have seen and have interviewed the wretched pair who still occupy that lonely dwelling of theirs upon the bleak moorland—the brother and sister, Simon and Hannah Creedy, with whom your childhood and your early youth were so strangely passed. Again I say, have no fear—be content!

"Both from the man and the woman—having at length convinced them that neither should be punished if they would confess everything and tell the plain truth—I have learned enough, seen enough—nay, more than enough, my dear Mrs. Darkwood—to prove to the whole world that you have been most cruelly wronged. I have got from Simon Creedy a couple of papers—each of them contains merely a few dozen lines, but, trust me, those few lines are as good as a dozen thousand—which will be the means of lifting the black cloud wholly from your past and rendering it as light as broad day. Better far than all—thank Heaven—these papers I speak of will at once help to restore you to the unhappy mother who for so many long and bitter years has mourned you as one forever lost to her in this world! I will not write the great good news; I will bring it myself to Redknights; for I am anxious that what I am now so hurriedly writing to you shall catch this night's mail. I am unable positively to say on which day I shall leave this place and come south; it may be to-morrow, perhaps the day following, but certainly not later. I shall travel straight to London, and then on to Redknights. Although I as good as say, 'expect me at the hour you see me,' be assured that as speedily as I can I will be the bearer of my own great good news! Even to me indeed it seems incredible—really too great and wonderful to be true. So too will you, I believe, say when you come to hear it and understand it! My kindest love to Mrs. Eversleigh. By-the-bye, does she yet know—does the old Squire himself yet know—that 'Frances Deane' is a myth, a fiction, what you will, and that in sober truth you are Daryl Darkwood's wife?

"Yes, it is simply marvellous how things have turned out—to what end events, catastrophes in your life have shaped themselves! A superstitious person might, I think, be pardoned for suggesting that you were born under a magic star! To conceive that of all men in creation you should have unknowingly married Daryl Darkwood, and that you are now living beneath the roof of Redknights, your husband's old home, as the friend and the daily companion of the old Squire's daughter, Marion Eversleigh! No, at present I cannot realize it, try how I will! And this reminds me. Daryl, like myself, I hear, has returned to England—has on several occasions lately been seen in the streets of London. I am very much afraid though, from what I have heard, that he has not, poor fellow, made his fortune in Germany! I do pray with all my heart that the old Squire, before it be too late, may be brought to his senses—to a right and Christian frame of mind. What is the use of, what is to be gained by carrying with one to the grave an obstinate and an unforgiving heart? I beseech you, do what you can with the Squire for Daryl's sake, so that his wretched, uncertain, his wandering and aimless life may soon now come to an end.

"Believe me, so long as the Squire and his grandson remain estranged, unreconciled, so long will Daryl Darkwood remain the man he now is. Surely—and I fancy I have said the same thing to you half a dozen times before at least—it is in the power of you, his wife—particularly as circumstances are with you at the present time—to break up and to destroy forever this unhappy and unnatural state of affairs? Good bye, until we meet at Redknights.

Ever your sincere friend,
"LEIGH EVERSLEIGH."

For several dumb seconds I stared stupidly at the clear bold signature—"Leigh Eversleigh." A good and an honest-looking name it was, thought I—a name that somehow fitted the man who bore it; and then I mechanically folded the letter, put it back into its envelope, and thrust it down again into my pocket, where, as I sat below with Marion Eversleigh, it had been kept hidden throughout the evening.

How long I remained sitting there upstairs—dumb, motionless, dazed—by the now comfortable fire, I have no remembrance. Doubt, hope, joy, fear, in turn or all together, passed through and filled my soul.

A gladness, vague and unutterable, thrilled me one moment; acutest terror and misgiving seized me the next. Various riddles, for which—for me, at any rate—it was impossible to find solutions, cropped up in and tortured my weary brain.

What was the story of my life? Who, then, was I? Who were my kindred, my own people? Were they lowly-born or of high degree? What, now, had the hidden future in store for me after my curiously chequered past?

Would that day week, or perhaps that day month, say, still see me living at dear, silent old Redknights: or by that time would my tent be pitched elsewhere, amidst fresh scenes and new, unfamiliar faces.

Then came a lightning thought of cruel anguish—how could I ever endure, come to pass what might, a lasting separation from Marion Eversleigh? That could not be borne I knew.

No, no, no! I had learned to love her with a love that could die out of my breast only with my last breath upon earth—my poor, tired heart and its best affection had taken deep root where Redknights stood!

Was I, I wondered bitterly, in this life doomed to be as the Wandering Jew, or as forlorn "Poor Jo"—forever "moving on?"

Surely, with my brief experience of it, I had "moved on" enough! Ah, yes! I yearned for no other home, for no greater or further rest in this world. I was now satisfied. No—from Redknights I could not go!

And what, I drifted into wondering then, would she—dear Marion Eversleigh—and the old Squire, her father, say when they should come to understand that I was really Daryl's wife?

How good, and generous, and noble had Leigh Eversleigh been to me—immeasurably better and more chivalrous than my own husband! How, should I live a thousand years, could I ever repay him for all he had done? How indeed?

And so he, Leigh, had actually been to Stonyhampton, and likewise to Moor Edge. I was musing, half unconsciously, yet with something of the old horror stealing coldly over me, as I recollected the mystery and the loneliness of my girlhood—had positively seen and talked with Simon Creedy and his sister Hannah! How strange, how complex was life! thought I. Death and its mystery, in comparison, were infinitely simple.

And it was at Moor Edge, was it not, where I had first met Daryl Darkwood—met him, worshipped him, obeyed him? Could it be possible that I had ever really loved Daryl—so passionately and so blindly loved him? I suppose so.

And it was at Moor Edge, was it not, that I had been silly enough to have my fortune told, and had given old Wise the Wanderer a half-crown for the telling of it?

What a child I was in those days—what a foolish ignorant child—when I had raced over the wide and breezy moorland with my faithful little mongrel doggy Jack Sprat, whose coat was coarse and whose tail was stumpy, but whose bright brown eyes were full of honest love for me! Poor Jack Sprat!

Dear little Jack Sprat, how wildly fond was he of chasing the larks of a dewy summer morning when the gossamer floated upon the air.

How frantically used he to bark, too, because they soared beyond his reach, heedless of him, trilling their lovely music against the misty far blue of heaven!

And Daryl, how could I know then that he was worthless and cruel? had poisoned Jack Sprat!

For had we not found him one morning quite dead in his barrel, lying there stretched stiffly out upon his straw, his faithful brown eyes stark, glazed, agonized, and his tongue hanging from his discolored jaws?

Yes, that was Daryl's work, I knew it, though never once in his life had he owned to the brutal act; and so, for the matter of that, was the dainty "Periwinkle" skeleton of myself which in the days that, like poor Jack himself, were for ever dead and gone I had used to hold so dear, just for the simple reason that he had painted it.

Daryl, I was thinking bitterly, and, ah me, how often had I thought so before! was versatile and many-sided; he could slay with one hand whilst he fondled with the other.

And to-night it all seemed so long, long ago!

Centuries, dim innumerable ages, and not a few brief years only, seemed indeed to have fled since I had lived with Simon Creedy, and met Daryl Darkwood, at Moor Edge.

And then I thought, ah, so tenderly and so regretfully! of my lost darling, my little dead angel who slept so well beneath her white cross in Arley churchyard.... Oh, Isla—Isla!... And I bowed my head to the table before me, and thus let the tears have their way.

* * * * * *

Had I sobbed myself to sleep? Perhaps I am not certain, but I could not have slept for long, surely not half an hour? for the clocks in the great still house, when I raised my head, were but striking midnight, and the fire was still glowing pleasantly, and the wax-candles in their tall silver candlesticks were not yet three-parts burnt down.

The wind and the rain, I fancied, had become less boisterous; the rain, in fact, for a brief while had ceased, and the weird moon was again struggling to show herself; howbeit that sound like the sound of a troubled sea crawling inland was still to be heard in the tossing trees.

Wearily I rose from my chair, pressed my hands upon my eyes, and began slowly to move towards the bed. Ah!

What was it—the wind? Hardly. Hark!

It was an odd uncanny noise, not easy to describe, a kind of dull jarring and scratching, a clinging and bumping against the outer walls of the house, as if some heavy living thing, by means of the ivy and the iron trellis, were with difficulty climbing in the direction of my window.

Paralyzed I stood in the centre of the room, my breath involuntarily suspended, every pulse in my body almost ceasing to quiver, and my eyes in a horrified stare fixed upon the shadowy blind.

The window itself was in fitful gloom, with the white and watery moonlight now full upon it outside, the huge bed and its sombre hangings cutting off the light from the candles and the fire.

A gust of wind swept past the window; the blind moved in the draught.

In that terrible moment, for the life of me, I could neither have stirred nor screamed.

The uncanny noise grew more distinct; the extraordinary scraping, the jarring, the quivering and straining of the ivy-stems upon the outer walls came nearer, higher, unmistakably nearer and higher.

Merciful Heaven, were thieves, desperate wretches, breaking in to Redknights? And should I, could I find neither the strength to move nor the voice to shout, be murdered, perhaps strangled by their dreadful ruffian hands, there where I stood so helplessly?

I felt that those as yet invisible hands were already clutching the stone-work of the window-sill; the next instant would see

——

Yes, there was a shadow, the shadow of a man's head and shoulders upon the blind now; it grew larger—yet larger!

An arm was raised, I saw it. I heard a knife, or some other small implement scraping at the bolt of the window. The bolt flew back. Click, click!

I tried to shriek for help, but I could not; my tongue refused to obey me, clave, hot and dry, within my mouth.

Then flashed across my brain a thought more fearful and intolerable than all the rest.

Instantly it gave me strength and courage; and my coward terror fled.

Danger to my beloved Mrs. Eversleigh! The robber-scoundrel would in all likelihood murder her as well as me.

The fright even, the shock alone perchance of the man's presence in the house, might mean nothing less than death to Marion Eversleigh—delicate and nervous as she was.

No; that should never be! My life for hers first, if need were.

The villain, whoever he was, should kill me then and there, should step over my dead body before he dared to injure so much as a hair of her dear head!

So instantly I resolved, and straightway acted.

"Kind Heaven," I breathed, "help me—in this hour of horrible danger do not forsake me!"

And, barely sensible of what I was actually doing, of the grim risk incurred by so desperate an act, but impelled by the conviction that there was not a moment to be lost, I rushed forward to the window, which in that selfsame minute was being stealthily raised.

In a trice I had dragged the curtains widely apart and sent the blind flying upward.

With dauntless mien I threw the casement high, and confronted the man upon the stone ledge outside.

In a minute more he would have leaped into the room. But a scream, swift and shrill, passed my lips.

I staggered backward, nerveless again, half fainting from an utter revulsion of feeling, against the lofty footboard of the great bedstead near.

The light touched the haggard white face of the man, showed me his sunken brilliant eyes, bright with an almost terrified red gleam in them, his uncovered head, his rough wet hair.

"Daryl—Daryl!" was all I could say, with my hand to my throat, a hoarse stifled whisper that seemed to choke me.

In his awful position he rocked to and fro, staring wildly at me, appeared wholly to forget the frightful peril of it, and unconsciously loosened his hold of the knotted gray ivy-limbs upon the wall.

"Merciful powers," he gasped out, "you here, Flower—my wife—at Redknights—in—in this room! Flower!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

NEVER write a letter when you are in a mood of irritation. There is an anger which is justifiable, there are resentments which are righteous: it is sometimes a duty to express indignation. But if you consider the matter, the occasions for putting such feelings on record are comparatively few. They come once in a lifetime, perhaps, and to many fortunate beings they never come at all. Upon the whole, people—our friends and neighbors, and the community of which we form a part—are trying to do the best they can; and in hours of good temper and health life wears a bright and sunny aspect.

BEST OF FRIENDS.

BY S. J.

Oh, best of friends who taught me how to love—
Who taught me what no other friend could do.
If Heav'n would give me whate'er I wished,
I'd ask for you.

Kings might wear crowns, with richest jewels set,
And statesmen gain the praise to greatness due:
Their wealth and glory I would envy not
Had I but you.

Poets might sing of Eden's happy bowers,
Artists portray its beauties to our view,
Still would I prize as fairer spot, by far,
My house with you.

And when our souls had bade farewell to earth,
And in immortal lands did live anew,
I'd crave no other paradise than this—
Your love and you.

The Stone Bouquet.

BY F. W. ROBINSON.

CHAPTER III.

I HAD raised my voice now, what demon I looked like then God knows, but she was huddled in the chair away from me, with her jeweled fingers held before her eyes.

I had frightened her, as well I might have done in my excitement. She could not answer me, and I went on.

"And you love him still. You would have hissed at him with scorn had the Frenchman been as far away from your heart as I am. I understood it all."

"No, no. You understood nothing; you are not fair to me, Ulric. I was only a weak girl then, I had not met you, seen you. Why do you make a grievance of all this at the last," she cried, "when you are going away from me? when you are leaving me alone?"

"That will be no grievance, only a relief," was my bitter answer.

She sprang up before me then, with her hands drawn from her face, and clenched together; with her eyes blazing with contempt for me, almost with hate.

"You coward!" she cried.

Then there was a pause, a sudden change of feature, and she fell back in her chair and gave way to a torrent of tears, of passionate sobs, of strange, wild wailings, that brought me to my knees, and at her side, in pity for her and the grief I had caused her.

I could not see her give way like this and remain uncharitable and exacting.

I forgot everything but that she was my fair young wife, and I had crushed her with my words.

I felt the coward that I was then, and her griefs were mine again.

"Forgive me, Cicely; think no more of it!" I implored. "I was mad or jealous; I will ask no further questions. It is all past—vanished—dead! And you are my wife—my wife, Cicely, to whom I have not said a harsh word until to-night; whom I will trust; who shall not hear a word of this again, I swear."

She moved at last, pacified by degrees; but she remained very white and sad.

The look in her eyes haunted me for months, as she rested her thin, hot hands upon my head.

"My poor, foolish old Ulric," she murmured in a low tone, "who would have thought my strong, stern husband would have given way like this!"

"Who would have thought——"

Then I paused—I was silent. I stooped and kissed her. I had no more to say. The grave, grey husband was almost himself again.

"There, there, compose yourself, Cicely; I will not say another word. This is our last night together for ever and ever so long; we must not look back upon it through our tears."

"Don't go," she whispered.

"Oh!—I must go. It is for the best," I answered; "it is too late to break my promise."

She did not speak again. Mechanically I turned to the parcel to give her time to recover from her sorrow, opened it, and drew forth a dark, reddish, heavy mass of stone, at which I looked in amazement for an instant.

"It is the bouquet," I said at last. "See, it has come back—a peace-offering, Cicely. We will take it as an omen."

Cicely glanced at it wonderingly, then shuddered.

A stone bouquet! Its flowers roughly defined still, but with all the poetry gone from it, a hard, unmalleable, angular mass. Yes, it was an omen.

* * * * * *

When I was away from her, when we had said good-bye, when thousands of miles stretched between my wife and me, I thought of the last night—that miserable hour of our parting, that first sharp quarrel between us.

I could remember too much, so much that was terrible and sad—and her troubled face was always before me.

There were so many questions which I should have liked to ask her now, and her past was, after all, so engrossed a story.

I was ignorant of it, I was still in the dark; she had taken me at my word and become impenetrably silent.

I was away, and could no solve my doubts.

I did not speak of them in my letters to her, and she never alluded again to the trial we had shared together on the day I went away.

Heaven alone knows how the weeks and months went by in the far-away land where work was arduous and news from home but intermittent.

Work did not cure me of the agony of suspense, as work will do at times to a mind ill at ease—it was ever before me to brood upon, and grow like a cancer in my heart, eating away all trust in her.

Every letter that I received from her became a study, an effort to detect a difference—the coldness born of our separation from each other, and of his proximity to her.

He would be always near her, the young, impassioned, handsome suitor—the first love from whom they tore her away—and I, old and gray and defenceless, was in the accursed country whither my ambition had borne me.

Yes, all this is a terrible recital, and yet so commonplace.

I was the slave of circumstances—the dupe.

They had married her to save her from him—that was the fact which weighed upon me, which bowed my head, and set deep furrows in my cheeks; not the arduous nature of the task to which I was a slave.

Yes, always before me—the tear-stained countenance of my wife, the face of the handsome Frenchman looking into hers, the clash of the band, and the waltz tune which it played for ever ringing in my ears, when I found them together, the old lovers—the hero and heroine of a story which had been scrupulously kept back, which no one had cared to tell me lest I should ask too many questions, and be scared away by the answers they might give me.

There were several French newspapers which reached the South American quarter wherein I was prosecuting my work; many of my coadjutors were French, whose friends had not forgotten them and sent them news.

It was strange how the one subject engrossed me even in this particular.

With every mail I pored over the advertisements in the French journals, and when I saw Danano's name, which was very frequently, it was an intense relief to me.

He was singing in Paris at such and such a time, and here was my wife's last letter of the same day, with the London postmark and dated from her father's house. They could not be together; it was all well then!

When Danano was not singing at the Opera, I began to fancy there came no home letters to me.

This was pure fancy, dissipated very often by a missive from her, but it was a new torture whilst it lasted, and I grew more crazed upon it.

Thinking it all over now, in this seclusion where no face I love can look at me unless it is down from heaven in pity and forgiveness, and my mother's face, not hers, I feel sure that I was mad.

After a sunstroke that I had had and recovered from, I was completely but quietly and unobtrusively mad, keeping my madness so completely to myself, that those about me did not even dream that Haviland's brain was flawed by one idea.

I was all business to them when business had grown a horror to me.

My great scheme was in their estimation, my one thought to which I sacrificed all health and comfort, when my one thought was Cicely, the woman I had married and left the young wife with a lover in the background watching like a wolf.

A man of her own age, belonging to her romantic past.

A Frenchman with his accursed false French sentiment that is ever like an ulcer on their books and plays and poems.

The climax was reached more speedily than I had calculated upon.

I had made up my mind to return to England before my time, to leave to others the reward of success, to let the world of science and of engineering say what it might of my want of courage to attempt great works and face great difficulties. I had lived down ambition and only cared for peace.

In a few months instead of two more years I should be on my way home.

I had acted unwisely to leave home altogether.

I should have known human nature better in my staid middle age. But this resolve was hastened on more rapidly than I had bargained for.

There wandered into our camping ground a new recruit, a man with high credentials from his Government, a friend of Danano, the French actor.

It was this friendship between him and my wife's old friend that arrested immediately my attention, although that friendship had not extended between them to implicit confidence.

This was all the better, or the worse, for me—I know not which—but it fixed my resolution to be gone.

Danano was the prince of good fellows, this man implied, a great genius—a fellow of infinite jest and infinite sentiment.

He was the idol of the Parisian world, favored by the aristocracy, flattered by the women altogether admirable.

"And so his head is turned by all this adulation?" I inquired after he had come to an end of his own encomiums. "A Frenchman's head whirls round very quickly with the breath of praise."

"Ah, but I do not believe that. Danano is a man of the world, a sensible being, far-seeing and acute. He keeps out of mischief," added the new-comer, with a laugh, "but then there is a reason for it."

"Ay! Indeed!"

"A strong passion which a melancholy Englishman would call an unfortunate attachment. A first love even, about which he raves, well, like a genius possibly. That is his one weakness," added his friend, "but it keeps him steady and quiet and out of what you call the hurly-burly. It has that effect with great men sometimes."

"He is a sentimentalist?"

"Yes, if you care to call him so."

"And a sorry one. And the lady's name?"

"Oh! I do not know," was the reply; "and had I had the honor of being acquainted with it, I should not have considered it my duty to have communicated it to monsieur," he replied with a little bow.

"No, no, of course you would not. And of course," I added with a laugh, "the lady is married."

"Oh! that is the rule over the world. One of the two is sure to be married, or where," shrugging his shoulders, "would be the interest of the story?"

"To a vile Frenchman," I answered sharply.

Then I left him amazed and indignant and thinking of pistols.

That evening I was on my way to England. I left everything in the wildest disorder.

I did not stop to explain; I told no one I was going, but I threw up my work, cast discredit on my name and good faith, and with a curt note of resignation on my desk left the workers to their own devices.

They said from that day in the camp that I was mad; they knew it more quickly than the dull-witted at home.

Danano's friend only thought that I was frightened. I had insulted his countryman and had stolen away to avoid the consequences.

An apology would have been sufficient—the Englishman need not have been so frightened as all that.

CHAPTER IV.

IN London again, and none aware of my return. That was the grim humor of it.

I caught myself laughing at the idea more than once in my room at the Grosvenor, but it was a laugh that told me I was unsafe, there was so wild a ring in it.

I had not hurried back to the arms of my wife, to the love which might be waiting for me, to the sure happiness I had cast aside for the fame that I had not secured.

I thought I would wait—that, not being expected, I should have opportunities of discovering the truth, which would be better than living all the rest of my days in an atmosphere of lies. To know the truth and act accordingly.

Was I better than a spy once more—a mean-spirited, dastardly spy?

Perhaps not; but I do not know the man beset by the curse of suspicion, who would have acted very differently.

He would have found it all out; and it is never a difficult task when the soul is set on the solving of the riddle.

For days I watched the house of my father-in-law, and paid others to watch, picking my spies up from the street and rewarding them handsomely for any scraps of news they gave me, and they were not scraps which contained any news of her.

She was away—or she was ill. A doctor's carriage at the door one morning set all my plots and plans flying to the winds.

I rushed into the house, announced myself, strode past the servant into the drawing-room, and when he had followed me would have caught him by the throat and squeezed the information out of him, had he not backed to the door in his alarm.

"Who is ill, is it Mrs. Haviland? why don't you tell me? Don't you know who I am?"

"It is Mr. Haviland, is it not?" gasped forth the old servant.

"Yes—yes—who is ill, I ask?"

"My master, sir."

"That's well. I am glad of that," I said, to the man's further amazement. "She is safe, then? Mrs. Haviland is well, I mean? Quite well?"

"I don't know, sir."

"Where is she?"

"I cannot say, Mr. Haviland, really. She is not staying here now."

I did not answer. Half stunned as I was by the information, I had expected it. I sat down.

"When the doctor has gone, tell Sir William I shall be glad to see him for a few moments."

"Yes, sir."

But when the doctor had departed, when he was descending the steps to his carriage, and the footman was holding the open door and looking after him, I stole from the drawing-room and went with swift steps upstairs.

The house was familiar to me and I knew my father-in-law's room.

In another instant I had entered unceremoniously and was standing by the sick man's bedside.

Sir William stared at me as at an apparition. He was twenty years older than when I left him.

"Great Heaven, Haviland! is it you?" he cried; "what has happened? What is it?"

He was very old and feeble, but I did not spare him. I had grown merciless.

"You can guess," I said.

"Cicely! My God—not Cicely. She——"

He stopped and waited for me to explain. And I was baffled.

"I have come to you to know what has happened, Sir William," I said; "it is I who should hear the news."

"Yes—but——"

"Where is my wife?"

"At her own home, your home, for what I know to the contrary. Haviland, have you not heard I have been seriously ill, that I am only just recovering? How strange you are!"

"Did she leave you because of your illness?" I asked bitterly.

He looked at me now in grave perplexity of mind. Did he see I was not as sane as when I had bidden him good-bye? Could he have any suspicion of me?

I should lose all clue to the truth if I were not more like my old self.

"You must not mind me, Sir William," I explained quite meekly, "I have been traveling night and day, and am more excited and upset than I ought to be. But I wanted an interview with you—I thought I would come on and see you and Cicely—of course, Cicely—at once. Where is my wife?" I repeated; "why does she keep away from me?"

"She left here for the country a few weeks ago——"

"You said she was in her own home!" I shouted now.

"She will return to-night to it. That is, I understand she will."

"You do not know, for certain?"

"Not for certain, Ulric. How should I know anything lying here? How inconsiderate you are!"

"Yes, I am. Forgive me," I replied. "You are a sick old man, and I have forgotten that. In what part of the country is she?"

"Folkestone."

"Folkestone! That is handy for France, Sir William."

"What do you mean?"

"Is she going on the Continent?"

"I believe not. I do not even know for certain that she is in Folkestone."

"You do not correspond?"

"N—no, Ulric. Not just at present."

"Has she written to you?"

"No."

"Not since she has left this house?"

"Ulric," pleaded the old man, "I am not strong enough to talk to you—to answer all your questions. Cicely and I have not agreed very well together of late, we have had a few words, not many," was the simple correction proffered here; "don't think, Ulric, it was anything like a quarrel between us. God forbid that. But she was unhappy here; she had grown used to a home of her own, to friends of her own, she said, since her marriage. She has outgrown my ways a little; that is all. And she thought it would be better, and that we should clash less, if she returned to her own establishment.

"Yes."

"After people are married, relations are better in the background for a while. It is an old saying, Ulric."

"Yes."

I could have shrieked at him a thousand questions now, but I would not put one more to him.

I had become full of a most merciful consideration for his father lying here sick unto death.

I could have asked him to reconcile his story of her being at home, with her being at Folkestone; demanded of him the meaning of her words that she had 'friends of her own;' asked him if he, a shrewd old man, had objected to those friends; and if one of them—curse him!—were named Danano?

I could have raved at him like the madman that I was—mad now with the awful consciousness that my wife was false to me, and that the old lover was the new and in the foreground of her life, and that I was set apart from her eternally. But I raved no more.

This old man was my friend; I had always respected him, honored him. And I saw he was in trouble.

"I will find Cicely," I said calmly, "in a day or two, at any rate. Good-bye, Sir William, and better health to you. I am sorry I have been so hasty, but I have been very anxious."

Then I went out of the room, and shut the door softly behind me.

CHAPTER V.

IT was night when I went to my own home. I took time to consider it all out.

I would do nothing more in haste. People were becoming suspicious. Even the servants I met upon the staircase of the hotel seemed to be glancing askance at me.

I do not know why—unless the muttering in my room had reached their ears.

The servant who admitted me was the man I had left in charge. It was his turn to be surprised.

"Mr. Haviland!" he exclaimed.

"Yes. I have come back."

He looked out into the wet street; I remember it was raining hard, for a cab heaped up with luggage, or some sign of a traveler's return, and then at him, standing there in evening dress. I passed him and went into my own house. It looked very desolate.

"When does your mistress come back from—Folkestone?" I inquired.

"We expect her back by a late train, sir," he replied; "she sent a telegram to the housekeeper this morning."

"I should be glad to surprise her, Robert," I said, with a pleasant, hearty laugh—not one of the new laughs which made people turn white to listen to me!—"this

must be a secret between you and me and the housekeeper, if you will. No one else."

"Does not mistress know that——"

"I am supposed to be in South America," I interrupted, "so this will be an agreeable surprise for her. I rely on your confidence. Don't forget. I shall reward you presently and—handsomely."

The man chuckled at my little plan. He was a dull fellow, without a grain of intelligence. On that night I was a better actor than Danano.

"Where shall I go?" I said, half thoughtfully.

"Your own study will be best, sir," suggested the man.

"Yes, capital."

"Mistress never goes into it," he explained. "I don't think the room has been opened for three months, sir. I had better light a fire."

"No. Bring me a lamp, and leave it as it is. And—take no further notice of me under any circumstances. You understand?"

"Yes, sir; I understand."

I passed upstairs into my old study; it was thick with dust. No one had thought of it or attended to it of late days. It was like a dead room.

Well, I was dead to her, and not expected back any more. And the servants had neglected it in the mistress's absence, and—like the mistress.

On the mantelpiece was the stone bouquet. It was a fitting emblem after all. I took it up and poised it in my hand. How heavy it seemed to have grown, or had I become weaker?

It was like an ugly iron ornament rusting away, and felt like iron to my touch. When the servant had brought the lamp, I locked myself in.

I would not be surprised. Then I sat down and waited and stared at the stone bouquet, and thought of all that had happened since I had sat there last in that room, of every miserable fact in my purposeless life.

Presently—two hours afterwards, it might be—there was a knocking and ringing at the outer door.

I unlocked my study and listened. There were voices talking in the hall downstairs—men's voices.

"She has not reached house yet?" I heard some one inquire.

"No, sir, not yet."

I knew the voice, and I came out on the landing-place and craned my face over the balusters to look at him. Had he glanced up, a face grinning out of a coffin would have dismayed him less.

"I will wait."

"But——"

"No, I will write a note, and see that Madame has it immediately upon her arrival."

I heard money chink in the servant's palm, as M. Danano was shown into a little room on the right of the door.

I went back to the study and waited very patiently. I could be very patient when I chose.

"Everything comes to him who waits." The line runs in that fashion somewhat.

Presently I heard the street door close after M. Danano, and the servant stood in the hall as if he were thinking, and with his finger nails pressed to his lips.

When he went away, I stole downstairs into the room wherein Danano had been shown. It was a favorite little room of my wife's, looking on the square. The gas was burning there.

On the desk in the corner was a sealed letter. I dashed at it, tore it open, and read amidst many wild words of affection and fool's rhapsody these words of warning.

"You must hesitate no longer. I will come at twelve for you, my beloved. It is too late for further deliberation. We must fly. Your husband is in London, and dangerous."

Dangerous! How did he know that I was dangerous?

I put the letter in another envelope, sealed it, and left it on the davenport whence I picked it up. It might be as well to see the end of this, the very, very end.

I went up to my study again, and sat there with the stone bouquet clutched in my hands, as if some meed of comfort, or of self-restraint, might come from its cold touch.

But the life-blood at my temples was like the fluttering of a bird, and my heart was swelling and leaping with sickening force within me, and everything before me was shimmering through a mist of blood, as though a red veil had been cast before my eyes.

So I knew all at last! It had all been true enough, then! There were no further doubts for me.

This could not end like the last act of a comedy, with explanations, forgiveness, and flippant jesting over past mistakes. The dark curtain must drop on the grimmest tragedy by which a man's life can be shadowed.

I was not the first man to be deceived—or the last man to avenge deceit. Not by many thousands, I thought, laughing again at the crowds of fools who were like me, who were about me too, and grinning at me.

I could see their faces—and their awful eyes—everywhere that night.

There came another knocking and ringing at the door. It was she. She had come home at last. Good! I could hear her voice in the hall.

I stole out on the landing again. I had the stone bouquet still in my hand, and that was very strange.

The servant was speaking to her, telling her of the last visitor who had called to see her.

"Where is his letter?" I heard her ask.

"In the mourning room, madam."

She passed in, and the servant lingered in the hall. Once he looked up the well-staircase, but he did not see me watching.

I had lowered the gas outside the study door, and was standing somewhat back, wondering myself what I was going to do next.

Her voice in the hall once more recalled me from my half stupor.

"Don't remove the boxes from the cab," she was saying hurriedly; "leave all as it is, Robert—tell the man to wait. I am called away—at once."

She was coming upstairs towards me! On the second stair, she paused and looked back at the servant.

"I have written a letter, give it to M. Danano when he returns. He will understand."

No, he will never understand in this world, neither will Cicely Haviland, nor her mad husband.

It is all left for the next. As she came upstairs, I sprang forward and struck at her from the darkness of my lair, and she fell back, with one little cry, a dead woman on the marble pavement of the hall.

I had killed her with the stone bouquet.

* * * * * *

They do not know at the asylum that I am writing this. They will see it presently and it may amuse them, or it may hang me.

It matters not which. I suppose I am mad now, very mad. But it was not Cicely's death that turned my brain, or wholly wrecked it.

That seemed just enough till I read the letter she had left for Danano, and which I had thought was her instructions where to meet him.

It was that letter which drove me raving mad. Only eight lines, and yet to bring me to this! They are seared into my soul till the judgment day.

"I will not see you. Have I been hiding from you all this while, and for so foul a sequel? I go away again to escape you, to wait fearlessly for my husband and to confess the truth to him; to confess that I was a weak vain woman, yes; one who loved you, yes; but guilty, never. And so God will forgive us both in His good time perhaps, and as my husband will. I will pray for it very hard. Farewell, Louis, and for ever. I begin my new life, my better life, from this night."

She was right. Before the ink was hardly dry she begun life anew.

[THE END.]

BEES, AND BEE-HUNTING.

IN some countries the honey-bee still roams at will and uncontrolled; this is notably the case in the western parts of this country and Canada.

The discovery of their natural hives for the purpose of securing the honey is the the calling of a class of persons known as bee-hunters.

A writer of considerable repute thus speaks on this subject:

"The beautiful forests in which we were encamped abounded in bee-trees; that is to say, trees in the decayed trunks of which wild-bees had established their hives. It is surprising in what countless swarms the bees have overspread the Far West within but a moderate number of years. The Indians consider them the harbinger of the white man, as the buffalo is of the red man, and say that in proportion as the bee advances, the Indian and the buffalo retire. We are always accustomed to associate the hum of the beehive with the farmhouse and the flower-garden, and to consider those industrious little animals as connected with the busy haunts of men; and I am told that the wild-bee is seldom to be met with at any great distance from the frontier. They have been the heralds of civilization, steadily preceding it, as it advanced from the Atlantic borders; and some of the ancient settlers of the West pretend to give the very year when the honey-bee first crossed the Mississippi."

A bee-hunt must be a very exciting adventure, and, as most people would think, attended with considerable risk: but the ingenuity of the settlers, and especially of the bee-hunters, who make a living of the business, is equal to the occasion.

Let us, for the sake of greater brevity, suppose a case, which is, however, little other than a narrative of simple facts.

A party sets out in quest of a bee-tree, a tree in the cavity of which a colony of bees have established themselves.

The party is headed by a veteran bee-hunter, a tall lank fellow, with his home-spun dress hanging loosely about him, and a hat which might be taken for a bee-skep.

A man similarly attired attends him, with a long rifle on his shoulder. The rest of the party, six in number, are armed with axes and rifles.

Thus accoutred, they are ready for any sport, or even more serious business. Reaching an open glade on the skirts of the forest the party halts, and the leader advances to a low bush, on which he places a piece of honeycomb.

This is a lure for the bees. In a very short time several are humming about it and diving into the cells.

Laden with honey, they rise into the air and dart off in a straight line with almost the velocity of a bullet. The hunters watch attentively the course they take, and set off in the same direction, still watching the course of the bees.

In this way the tree where the bees have made their home is reached. But it will often happen, as may be suspected, the bees will elude the sight of the most vigilant hunter, and the party may wander about not succeeding in finding any treasure.

Another method is then adopted; few bees are caught and placed in a small box with a glass top, having at the bottom a small piece of honeycomb.

When they have satisfied themselves with honey, two or three are allowed to escape, the hunters taking care to observe the direction of their flight and to follow them as rapidly as possible.

When these bees are lost sight of, two or three others are set free and their course followed, and so on until the identical tree has been reached.

It sometimes happens that one set of bees take an opposite course to their predecessors.

The hunter knows by this that he has passed the tree, or otherwise missed his mark, and he retraces his steps and follows the lead of the unerring bees. The sight of the bee is so strong and keen that it can descry its home at an immense distance. It is a well-ascertained fact that if a bee be caught on a flower at any given distance south of its home, and then be taken in a close box an equal distance north of it, the little creature, when set free, after flying in a circle for a moment, will take a straight course to its identical tree.

Therefore, the hunter who has intelligence, and perseverance on his side is sure to be successful in the end.

It not unfrequently happens that when in the immediate neighborhood of the tree, the hunter may not be able to distinguish the particular one he is searching for from the rest, as the entrance to the bee-castle is commonly many feet above the ground. He is not then at the end of his resources. A small fire is kindled, and upon a piece of stone or other suitable material made hot, some honeycomb is placed; the smell will at once induce the whole colony of bees to come down from their citadel, when the hunters proceed with their axes to bring down the tree.

A vigorous writer thus describes the proceedings, when the party of hunters had traced the honey-laden bees to their hive in the hollow trunk of a blasted oak, into which, after buzzing about for a time, they entered at a hole about sixty feet from the ground:

"Two of the bee-hunters now plied their axes vigorously at the foot of the tree, to level it with the ground. The mere spectators and amateurs in the meantime drew off to a cautious distance, to be out of the way of the falling of the tree and the vengeance of its inmates. The jarring blows of the axe seemed to have no effect in alarming or agitating this most industrious community; they continued to ply their usual occupations; some arriving full-freighted into port, others sallying forth on new expeditions, like so many merchantmen in a money-making metropolis, little suspicious of impending bankruptcy and downfall. Even a loud crack, which announced the disrupture of the trunk, failed to divert their attention from the intense pursuit of gain. At length, down come the tree with a tremendous crash, bursting open from end to end, and displaying all the hoarded treasures of the commonwealth. One of the hunters immediately ran up with a wisp of lighted hay, as a defence against the bees. The latter, however, made no attack, and sought no revenge; they seemed stupefied by the catastrophe and unsuspicious of its cause, remaining crawling and buzzing about the ruins, without offering us any molestation."

When the tree had been brought down, the whole party fell to with spoon and hunting-knife to scoop out the combs with which the hollow trunk was stored. A single tree has been known to yield from one hundredweight to one and a half hundredweight.

SQUARE THROATS.—Skim milk cheese used to be made in very large quantities in Suffolk (being known by the name of "Suffolk bang"), where at one time it had such an unenviable reputation that it was asserted it used to be chopped up with a hatchet instead of being cut with a knife; or if a man wanted a bit of stick to fasten up a gate with, and could not find a piece of wood handy, he would cut a wedge off his luncheon cheese for the purpose and make free of it. In old times, when the farm laborers lived partially or wholly in the house with the farmer, the quality of the cheese used often to become the bone of contention, being at times too hard to bite; so that it used humorously to be said the laborers in that part of the country having to "bolt" their cheese in blocks, by a long course of practice had acquired square throats.

SIX Scotch bailies came to present an address of congratulation to Victoria. They asked what they had to do on entering the Queen's presence, and were told they should kiss hands. Thereupon Bailie No. 1, as he solemnly stalked past the throne, raised his hand to his mouth and blew her Majesty a kiss. The remaining five followed suit till the Queen had a fit of the heartiest laughter she had enjoyed for a long time.

Scientific and Useful.

PAPER DOORS.—Doors formed of two thick paper boards, stamped and molded into panels, and glazed together with glue and potash, and then rolled through heavy rollers, are coming into use. They are better than wood in that they will not shrink, swell, crack or warp. They are made waterproof with a mixture.

COPYING PRINT.—Printed matter may be copied on any paper of an absorbent nature, by dampening the surface with a weak solution of acetate of iron, and pressing in an ordinary copying press. Old writing may also be copied on unsized paper if wet with a weak solution of sulphate of iron mixed with a simple solution of sugar syrup.

GLASS BEARINGS.—Glass bearings for wheels are now being tried on some of the railways. The advantage expected of them is absence of friction. The glass employed is of peculiar quality, very hard and strong. What the result of the trials is likely to be, is not stated; but the idea of using glass bearings, if not on a large, at least on a small scale, and in small apparatus, appears to be worth trying, provided a suitable glass can be manufactured.

A COMBINED HOSE AND BROOM.—A broom for cleansing pavements, door-steps, etc., has recently been patented. The place of the broom-stick is taken by a metal tube, which terminates in a jet over the broom, and communicates by a flexible rubber pipe with the water supply. When the broom is in use the water is allowed to run through the tubing, and thus the labor of first flooding the pavement, etc., with a pail of water is done away with.

A ROWING MACHINE.—There are, we believe, appliances of different kinds already in existence for enabling people to enjoy the exercise of rowing without either boat or water; but such apparatus have usually been objected to because of their being stationary. But a rowing machine has now been devised, on which the exercise is considered to be more agreeable. The apparatus provides for a continuous or endless track, with a boat or boat-shaped car on wheels, and supplied with oars. The act of rowing gives a forward movement to the "vessel," impelling it along with a certain degree of exhilarating impetus, which it is obviously impossible to obtain from the fixed machines above alluded to.

Farm and Garden.

GRINDSTONES.—A grindstone conveniently placed ready for use, leaves no excuse for working with a dull axe or other cutting instrument that never does good work.

SHADE TREES.—Shade trees sometimes need attention. Wood ashes should be applied around all kinds of shade trees at least once a year. The hedges will also be benefitted by ashes.

INSECTS.—A box with entrance holes no larger than an inch in diameter will be an inducement for the wrens to take possession, as they will then be safe from the attacks of larger birds. Wrens are excellent insect exterminators, and should be encouraged in every possible manner.

PROTECTING STOCK.—Flies are a terrible annoyance to stock during this season, and every stable should be supplied with screens to the windows and doors. They are not expensive, and will enable the horses and cows to secure rest. In the pasture the insects cannot well be avoided.

THE PIGS.—If a good, dry clay bed cannot be secured for the pigs, says a writer, it is better to retain the plank floor. But the clay floor is best, and if it can be of about the quality of dirt which will make a good brick, it is better than black soil, and if it is inclined to reddishness, so much the better, as then there is an assurance that it contains the muriate of iron, which is healthy for hogs, applied outwardly or inwardly.

COMPOST.—Make a compost heap upon which to place the refuse of the farm, such as tops of vegetables that are not fed to stock, the rakings and leaves, and add a portion of manure occasionally. Throw soapsuds, urine, and other liquids upon the heap, care being taken to have all material cut fine. Dry dirt may also be added as an absorbent. It will prove excellent for the garden next spring, as its fine condition will permit of its being spread evenly.

ANTS.—There are four ways to get rid of ants in the garden. The first is to sink a rather wide-mouthed bottle in the ant-hill so that the top of the bottle is a trifle below the level of the ant-hill, and partly fill the bottle with sweetened water. Second, saturate a large coarse sponge with sweetened water and place on old dishes where ants abound; when black with ants throw the sponge into boiling water, wash the ants out and replace. Third, lay fresh bones about; the ants will quickly cover them, when they are served in the same manner as with the sponge. Fourth, place a mixture of paris green or London purple on old dishes where the ants can have access.

KING OTTO of Bavaria is crazy on the subject of shooting people. Every day he is allowed to take a gun containing a blank cartridge, and fire at a man who is purposely skulking among the trees on the grounds of the Nymphenburg palace. The man falls as if killed, and the mad king's desire is appeased for the day. So runs the narrative.

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Our Part in Life.

It is the way of the world that while the young are easily surmising what life is to bring them, and the old are quietly pondering what it has brought to them, few realize to how large an extent life is just what they themselves make it. It is a book the pages of which are turned one by one, not merely to be read, but to show us ever new and shifting scenes, and also to reflect our own image.

The external world may be supposed to present similar views to every one. Certainly we cannot change, by looking, its mountains into valleys, or its cities into plains. Yet perhaps no two people, looking at the same scene, see it exactly alike. One, gazing upon a landscape, sees exquisite grace and beauty in the diversity of hill and dale, lake or stream, lit up, it may be, by sunset glories. Another sees in it the promise of rich harvests and plentiful returns. Another regards it solely with a view to the facilities it offers for a new railroad; while yet another, with dull or preoccupied mind, gazes without consciously seeing anything at all.

The scene is to each one, what he makes it—the reflections of his own mind. The cheerful and the melancholy man look upon the very same objects; to one, they assume a bright and roseate hue, full of joy in the present, and hope for the future; while to the other, they suggest only weariness and disappointment.

Still more emphatically is this the case in the social world. The opinion men hold of society is largely a reflection of their own characters, and their influence goes far toward making society actually conform to those opinions. The selfish and grasping man is always imagining those with whom he deals to be selfish. He excuses his own meanness on the ground that he must guard against the meanness of others, and his excuse has just this foundation, that his own character naturally diffuses itself among those with whom he deals.

Every disposition exerts a magnetic attraction for its like, and the unjust man will meet with injustice, the rude with rudeness, the cold with coldness, and the proud and jealous with pride and jealousy. On the other hand, the just and true, the generous and kind, the gentle and loving draw to themselves the same quality in others, and thus to them also is social life what they make it. No one can enter into the presence of a pure and good man without having the better parts of his nature aroused, and his desire for improvement quickened.

The opinions expressed of society as a whole are a tolerably fair criterion of the character of the one who holds them. It is the man of unflinching integrity who has the most faith in the general honesty of the community—a faith not shaken by the occasional experience he meets of the reverse. It is the unscrupulous and slippery man who suspects roguery in every quarter and ridicules the very idea of disinterestedness. He who complains that the world is hollow and heartless unconsciously confesses his own lack of sympathy, while he who believes that people, as a whole, are kindly and humane, is certain to have the milk of human kindness in his own nature.

The conditions and surroundings of life are also largely what we make them. This is the case, first of all, through our direct influence. Prosperity and adversity are often the simple effects of conduct. Industry, thrift, skill, discretion, principle underlie the one; idleness, extravagance, self-indulgence and folly, the other. As a general thing, we reap that which we have sown. But where it is not so, where circumstances over which we have no control, come in the form of trial or joys, even these are greatly modified by the spirit in which they are received.

Who has not seen poverty or sickness or bereavement borne so heroically and cheerfully that the afflicted one seemed rather an object of envy than of compassion? On the other hand, who has not seen one with every outward advantage that earth has to bestow, rendering himself and others miserable by fretful complaints of troubles too petty to deserve a moment's notice? The faithful endeavor to do right, and to bear quietly what must be borne, is of itself a fruitful source of happiness and serenity; while a murmuring and discontented spirit may poison the richest blessings and turn them into bitter evils.

No one should underrate the inevitable sorrows of life, nor deny to them the sympathy and loving aid which should ever be extended to them; but permanent misery certainly speaks of grave defects in character, of faults that need much pruning away, of feeble qualities that need stimulating. Life is largely what we make it, and whatever may be its clouds and storms they will be chased away at length by the clear sunshine of a strong and noble character. "Fill thy heart with goodness, and thou wilt find that the world is full of good."

It is a great mistake to suppose that real honesty can ever be followed and maintained from motives of policy. Although the proverb, "Honesty is the best policy," in its broad and deep sense, is the very truth, those who take it as their motive to an honest life will miss both its truth and its gladness, because they have mistaken the meaning of honesty itself. They think of it only as a series of actions, whereas it is in truth a spirit that reigns supreme in the heart and shapes the life. He who is not imbued with this spirit, who covets the gains of dishonesty, and only resigns them in the hope that honesty may confer a greater gain, has yet to learn the meaning of honesty. However successfully he may have assumed its garb, he is ignorant of its essence. A well-known divine, writing on the conditions of success, says: "Wisdom has riches in her right hand, and honor and long life in her left; but she must be wooed and won for her own sake, not for her dowry. She will not accept the fortune hunter. If a man cares more for honesty than policy, he will find honesty the best policy; but the honesty which is merely policy is no honesty at all."

Wealth, station, applause, luxury, which are so often sought, are not necessary to happiness; they often minister to it, but it can flourish without them. Health is more essential, though there are some happy invalids. A moderate supply of the physical comforts of life seems needful, though happiness and poverty have dwelt together. The exercise of our faculties in some useful and, if possible, congenial direction is a large contributor. Idleness and overwork are both disastrous to happiness; so is vice in all its forms, whatever be the glittering pleasures it holds out. Successful endeavor of every rightful kind, obedience to the voice of conscience and reason, the love and help we give, even more than that we receive, are all ministering influences to happiness.

Do not lay out for yourself for any day, or week, or month, more than you can accomplish. Do what you purpose, or ascertain that it cannot be done, and dismiss it, and turn to the next best thing, finishing as you go. Take first in hand the things which should be done, and let those which may be done come after. Having decided on your day's work, if it is part of a continuous occupation, fix as definitely as possible on a good place to stop, and having ceased work, cease worry. Leave no loose ends, and your day's work will furnish you with a composing-draught better than poppy or mandragora. Complete whatever can be completed, and mentally post your books.

Industry is essentially social. No man can improve either himself or his neighbor without neighborly help, and to better the world is to set the world to work together. Every useful invention has been carried out and perfected by the co-operation of many minds, or by the successive applications of varied genius to the same object age after age. The mechanic must aid the philosopher, or he must stand still in his demonstrations; and the philosopher must aid the mechanic, or he will work and work without wisdom. The astronomer needs the telescope, and the chemist his material and apparatus. The sciences hang on the arts and the arts on the sciences.

A gift, to be perfect, when given to persons of mature age, must sink itself in its symbolism. That is, the emphasis must be laid by both giver and receiver, not upon what it is, but upon what it expresses. It is the feeling of esteem, of respect, of affection, of sympathy, of approbation, seeking an outlet through the gift, that makes, or ought to make, its real preciousness. This it is which throws a halo around the simplest token, and sometimes makes a violet or a curl of hair more truly valued and treasured than the heaviest gold or the rarest gem.

In the supremacy of self-control consists one of the perfections of the ideal man. Not to be impulsive, not to be spurred hither and thither by each desire that in turn comes uppermost; but to be self-restrained, self-balanced, and governed by the joint decision of the feelings in council assembled, before whom every action shall have been fully debated and calmly determined—that it is which education—moral education, at least—strives to produce.

Of all the various debts which we owe to our fellow men, that of silence is the one most frequently disregarded. There are men who pry into the secret thoughts of their neighbors, probe their feelings, and show by wordy curiosity how little they respect rightful privacy. This is often mistaken for good-will and sympathy, but it is far enough from that delicate sympathy which, while ever glad to give help or comfort by word or deed, yet shrinks from "rushing in where angels fear to tread."

The loving heart is the strong heart. The generous hand is the hand to cling to when the path is difficult. There is room for the exercise of charity everywhere—in business, in society, and the church; but the first and chiefest need of it is at home, where it is the salt which keeps all things sweet, the aroma which makes every hour charming, and the divine light which shines starlike through all gloom and depression.

Every permanent state of mind is largely the effect of habit. Just as we can perform an action so continually that it comes to be habitual, so we can encourage conditions of mind till they too come to be habits of thinking and even of feeling.

Wherever anything is wrong quit it, and quit it short off; don't stop to argue over it. A good many want to taper off in sin. They taper off generally to the big end.

Consume little time in regret. The best repentance is reformation. What tears of contrition are powerless to effect, an altered life easily accomplishes.

No one in anger is fit to estimate an offence or to redress a wrong; and he who attempts it is sure to have cause for regret, if not for bitter repentance.

He who seldom thinks of heaven is not likely to get there; as the way to hit a mark is to keep the eye fixed upon it.

The World's Happenings.

The State of Michigan has a shore line 1920 miles long.

More than 3000 persons in New York make a living by street music.

A blacksmith at Mitchell, Texas, bends horseshoes flat by standing on them.

An electric kettle has been made in Berlin, and water will boil in it in 15 minutes.

Rhode Island is the only State in the Union whose Legislature votes by secret ballot.

The United States has 300,000 square miles of coal, or three-fourths of all the coal in the world.

The United States now has 141,300 miles of railroad, or almost twice as much as it had 13 years ago.

Not one of 26 tramps arrested in one night last week in Central Park, New York, was under 20 years of age.

Way down South in Dixie the cars for colored people traveling on railway trains are called "Jim Crow cars."

An Illinois schoolteacher who kept a boy sitting on a chunk of ice for two hours as a punishment has had to pay $300 damages.

A grown turkey swallowed a bee the other day, in Georgia, which stung its vitals, and in less than an hour it was stone dead.

Excessive smoking of cigarettes was the certified cause of the death at New Durham, N. J., the other day, of William Cranston, aged 15.

In a walk of 45 minutes at Newport one may pass the residences of a baker's dozen of people whose aggregate wealth is over $400,000,000.

"Boomaniac" is a new word coined at San Francisco to describe the lunatics who are engaged in wild inflation of values in Southern California.

A law of Chihuahua makes it a finable offense not to vote at an election. A married man may vote at 18, but one not married can not vote until he is 25.

From the May salary of a New York city school teacher, who receives $700 a year, there was deducted one cent because she had one day been tardy two minutes.

Glass dollars are something new. Glass is used with the white metal to improve the ring of the bad coin. The glass dollars are brittle, and can be broken easily with a hammer.

It has been computed that the death rate of the world is about 67 a minute, 96,720 a day, and 35,630,365 a year; while the birth rate is 70 a minute, 100,800 a day, and 36,792,000 a year.

It has been estimated that a pair of wrens destroy at least 600 insects a day. They have been observed to leave their nests and return with insects from forty to sixty times an hour.

A lady in New York who advertised for a girl "to do light housework," received a letter from an applicant who said her health demanded sea air, and asked where the lighthouse was situated.

At Santa Cruz, Cal., lately, two large Newfoundland dogs annoyed children in bathing by continually dragging them from the water, evidently under the impression that the youngsters were drowning.

The Montreal police raided a house in that city one day recently, and captured 200 cats that had been making the neighborhood miserable. Their owner, who is a wealthy woman, will fight the case in the courts.

Tyrotoxicon in a New York confectioner's ice-cream poisoned 25 families the other day. The ice-cream was made very carefully in clean vessels and from the purest and best materials. Beware of the deadly tyrotoxicon.

A gamin in New York, who was cut with a whip by the driver while "catching behind" a loaded furniture car, waited his opportunity and cut the rope that bound the load, permitting a portion of the latter to drop into the street.

A Florida farmer noticed two of his milch cows fighting recently, and afterwards discovered that one had broken the other's neck, while their horns were so firmly interlocked as to require those of the dead cow to be sawn off before the living one could be released.

A Chinaman, said to be the only tramp of his nationality known in this section of the country, was sent up for six months in New York. His name is Ah Chee. He is 48 years old and a frequenter of the stale beer dives. He has been discarded by the other Celestial residents of New York.

A dream nearly cost a furnace engineer at Phillipsburg, N. J., his life the other night. He was asleep at home and dreamed that something had gone wrong at the furnace. He sprang out of bed, and in doing so struck his arm against a glass, cutting an artery. He came near bleeding to death.

One very funny custom of the theatres here says a correspondent writing from Mexico, is their manner of keeping their reserved seat diagram, the seats being marked upon it by small holes, in which are placed wooden pegs. When you buy a reserved seat the ticket-seller removes the peg from the hole you have selected and gives it to you as your check.

An Arkansas man under charge of assault with attempt to kill, has neither hands or feet. His legs are amputated below the knee, his left arm is off below the elbow, and his right above the elbow. Yet the assault was committed with a Winchester rifle, and he is said to ride and shoot as well as his associates. He has the reputation of being a desperate character.

A convict in the Joliet, Ill., penitentiary, Rodney Burns, who could no either read or write when sent there in 1880, and who surprised the prison authorities by the zeal with which he wrought overtime so as to buy books to improve his mind, is reported insane from overwork and overstudy. He is said to have mastered Greek, Latin, French and German, after acquiring the common English branches.

AT SUNSET.

BY M. M. POLLARD.

That evening we looked at the sunset golden,
  That pathway of light o'er the western sea,
And you sang me a rhyme from a legend olden,
  That youth and love like that path should be:
Together we gazed on the summer ocean,
  Where dancing ripples but kissed its breast.
No breeze awoke to ruffle its motion,
  No storm arose to disturb its rest.

Soft was the warmth of the sunset splendor,
  With its magical tintings of crimson light,
Our hearts were true, and our words grew tender,
  As the world around us was glad and bright;
Too soon from our gaze the sun had vanished,
  Too quickly the glory had changed to gray,
The gleam of light from the sea was banished,
  And gone was the glow of that summer day.

Oh, type of youth, that is fair and fleeting!
  Oh, fading vision of joy and light!
Oh, evening sunset! for aye repeating,
  "Youth yields to age as the day to night."
True love alone has a life immortal,
  That perishes not in Time's rapid tide;
So we gaze in hope to the far-off portal
  Where the soul's deep faith will be glorified.

A Last Chance.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

ON a certain morning in September, 1865, Monsieur Aristide Mouron, a retired mercer, occupying a third floor in the Rue Turenne, received a letter by the early post.

"Singular!" he remarked, partly to himself, partly to his daughter, a pretty blonde who was sitting near him, engaged with some fancy work; "I don't know the handwriting. No," he added, peering at the address through his spectacles, "I certainly never saw it before."

"Hadn't you better open it, Father?" said Mlle. Claire in a slightly impatient tone.

"All in good time, my dear," replied M. Mouron, still staring at the envelope in profound meditation. Then, carefully extracting from it the enclosed epistle, he looked at the signature. "Victor Duhamel," he exclaimed. "What can he have to say to me?"

"Read it, papa, and we shall know," quietly suggested the young lady.

"'Monsieur,'" slowly began the old gentleman, "'you will doubtless be surprised on receiving this,'—What a hand he writes; positively copperplate! He ought to be bookkeeper in some big house of business, but unfortunately he isn't. Let me see, where was I?—'On receiving this, and be disposed to consider the request I am about to make to you an act of presumption. But even a refusal is preferable to suspense, and I can control my feelings no longer.'—I haven't the remotest idea what he means!"

"Read a little further," insinuated his daughter. "We shall soon see."

"'In a word, I love Mademoiselle Claire, and have reason to believe that the attachment is reciprocal!' Eh, what?" cried M. Mouron, with a sudden start that nearly overset his chair. "Is this true or do my eyes deceive me?"

"Perfectly true, papa."

"That he has the audacity to love you, and actually presumes to think——"

"That I love him in return," supplemented Mlle. Claire. "Certainly he does, and only waits for your consent to our marriage."

"How do you know that?"

"Because he told me yesterday he intended to ask you for it."

"Indeed! Then you may tell him that I distinctly refuse to hear another word on the subject. A young fellow without a sou!"

"That is no fault of his," remonstrated Claire. "Besides, if he has no fortune, he is sure to make one. You have said so yourself."

"I?"

"Yes, I have often heard you compliment him on his literary attainments, and say that he was certain to make his way in the world."

"If I did, it does not follow that I should choose him for a son-in-law. If he had only something in hand to begin with!"

"That is just what we are coming to," said Claire. "The end of his letter explains everything."

"Ah! you seem to know all about it."

"Of course I do. I have a copy of it in my pocket."

"In that case," replied M. Mouron in a half-amused, half angry tone, taking up the letter as he spoke, "I may as well know it too. 'My sole object in life is to be the husband of Mademoiselle Claire, but not until I am able to offer her a position in some degree worthy of her. To the accomplishment of my desire, every faculty I possess will henceforth be devoted, and I am confident of success. One year's probation is all I ask. At its expiration, I pledge myself either to bring you a sum of twenty thousand francs as an earnest of what I hope to do in the future, or at once to renounce all claim to your daughter's hand.' H'm," concluded M. Mouron, "twenty thousand francs isn't much, but the lad speaks fairly enough."

"Wouldn't it be better, papa," slyly suggested Claire, "to hear what he has to say? He is not far off."

"How do you know where he is?"

"Because it has just struck nine, and at that hour he was to be in the street opposite our house."

Then, without waiting for an answer, she opened the window and made a sign which was evidently expected, for a minute or two later the servant announced "Monsieur Victor Duhamel."

On the entrance of his visitor, M. Mouron assumed a majestic air, and acknowledged the young man's respectful salutation by a patronising wave of the hand.

"Pray be seated, Monsieur Victor," he began, affecting a dignified ease of manner, but in reality hardly less embarrassed than the individual he addressed. "I have perused your letter—a most creditable specimen of penmanship, I must say—and gather from it that you are—ahem—desirous of obtaining my consent to your marriage with my daughter."

Victor bowed assent. "It is my fondest hope," he replied.

"I will not deny," pursued the ex-mercer, "that I had other views—financially more advantageous—for her. But under the circumstances," here his hatchety features relaxed into something between a smile and a grin; "I might be disposed to waive my objections and accept your conditions, if I saw any reasonable chance of your fulfilling them."

"I assure you," said Duhamel, "that ——"

"Excuse me," interrupted M. Mouron, "but a few questions are indispensable. May I ask what are your present means of existence?"

"My salary as a clerk in a government office, amounting to a hundred and five francs a month."

"Total, twelve hundred and sixty francs a year. No other resource?"

"None. My earnings have hitherto sufficed for my wants, and I have even economised a few hundred francs out of them. Henceforth it will be different. I shall resign my situation to-day, and depend upon my own exertions."

"They may possibly bring you in less," said M. Mouron with an ominous shake of the head. "And your projects for the future, what are they?"

"To utilize the excellent education I have received, and turn my knowledge to account. I am well acquainted with the principal modern languages, and speak them fluently; the classics have always been my favorite study; and in my leisure hours I have acquired some proficiency in the oriental tongues. Besides, I have a natural taste for painting, and have even dabbled in chemistry. With so many chances in my favor, one at least ought to serve my turn."

"I hope it may," returned M. Mouron doubtfully; "but in my business twenty thousand francs were not so easily gained. However, it rests with you to succeed or fail. To-day is the fifteenth of September, 1865; on this day next year, if you have kept your word, I will keep mine. Until then, adieu."

"You believe in me still, Mademoiselle?" said Victor, with a parting glance at Claire as he left the room.

"With all my heart and forever," was her reply.

* * * * * *

Ten months after the above recorded interview, a young man, the occupant of a miserable attic in the Leopoldstadt, the poorest quarter of Vienna, was sitting in a despondent attitude at a rickety deal table, on which lay an unfinished letter. His pale and careworn features bore the unmistakable marks of suffering and privation, and he sighed deeply as he threw down his pen.

"I cannot do it," he muttered, in a voice broken by emotion. "The task is too hard, too cruel. And yet I must release her from this fatal engagement, which I once insanely hoped would be a source of happiness to both. Those who have struggled as I have can alone know what it has cost me to bear up against the consciousness of failure, and, still despairing, cling to the delusive visions conjured up by a disordered brain! A few words more will tell the tale, and they must be written."

With a look of inexpressible anguish, he read over the commencement of his letter and had already taken up his pen to continue it when the door opened gently, and a stout, thickset personage with a frank and pleasant countenance entered the room.

"Herr Victor," said the new-comer in German, "pardon the intrusion. Not having met you for some days, I feared you might be ill, and came to see if I could be of any service. You work too hard, my good friend, and overtax your strength. Take a doctor's advice and come with me. We will dine together, and a stroll in the Prater will do you no harm."

"You are very kind, Herr Rieger," replied Duhamel with a faint attempt at a smile; "but I feel so weak and dispirited that——"

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed his visitor, as a sudden thought struck him. "I see it all now: you have eaten nothing to-day?"

Victor hid his face in his hands. "Nor yesterday," he faltered out. "I have not a kreutzer left."

"That at least can be remedied," said the Doctor; "and the sooner the better. Put on your hat and come. When we have dined, you shall tell me your story."

A comfortable repast in an adjoining restaurant, and a glass or two of sparkling Hungarian wine especially recommended by Herr Rieger, having somewhat invigorated his companion, the former handed a cigar to his guest, and lit another himself.

"I can't say much for our Viennese tobacco," he observed; "but you probably know something about government monopolies in France."

Victor thought of the inscrutable productions of Gros-Caillou, and answered emphatically in the affirmative.

"And now, my friend," continued the Doctor, "let us talk seriously. Since I first had the pleasure of making your acquaintance in the bookseller's shop near the Graben, I have often wondered that with your abilities you have not succeeded in turning them to some account."

"The usual ill luck, I suppose," replied Duhamel, "that a literary man and an artist—and unfortunately for me I am both—must expect when he has neither influence nor money to back him. I have tried everything in vain. Publishers with one accord declined even to look at my manuscripts, or proposed to print them at my expense.

"A commission I had solicited from government to copy a Murillo at the Louvre brought me the munificent offer of five hundred francs for a year's labor.

"At last, despairing of success in Paris, and having a special object in view, on the accomplishment of which my future happiness entirely depended, I came hither in the hope of discovering an old friend, a Viennese by birth, of whom I had lost sight for several years, and who would certainly have aided me by every means in his power.

"I was too late. On inquiry, I ascertained that after embarking his whole fortune in a speculation which had failed, he had left the country and emigrated to America.

"My scanty resources were nearly exhausted, and had not the bookseller, in whose shop I met you, kindly recommended me as a teacher of French to two or three of his lady customers, I should probably have starved.

"As it is, since the warm weather set in, my pupils have followed the example of the fashionable world and started off for Ischl or the Tyrol. Until I can procure some other employment, I am absolutely penniless."

"Well, well," said Herr Rieger, "we must contrive to find something for you. But first, I am curious to know what the special object on which you are so intent can possibly be?"

"You will laugh at me," replied Victor, "when I tell you that in order to attain it I must be in possession, before the fifteenth of September, of no less than twenty thousand francs."

"Twenty thousand francs!" exclaimed the Doctor. "Nearly ten thousand Austrian florins! If I earn half that sum in a year, I consider myself exceptionally lucky. You must be mad to dream of such a thing."

"Mad or sane matters little now," sighed Duhamel, "as you will say when you have heard my story."

Herr Rieger listened attentively while the young man briefly narrated the result of the interview in the Rue Turenne, and his inability to fulfil the conditions on which depended his marriage with Claire.

"I see no way out of it," he said; "unless——"

"Unless what?"

"Nothing. The idea is too absurd. And yet," he added after a moment's reflection, "it is just possible. Tell me, have you a good digestion?"

"Excellent. Why?"

"Never mind. Do you dislike pigeon?"

"On the contrary. But what has that to do with my position?"

"Everything. Listen to me, and don't interrupt. There is a society in Vienna, of which I am a member, whose object is to investigate the truth or falsity of certain popular theories which are not based on established facts. One of these, namely, the physical impossibility of eating a pigeon every day for an entire month, has particularly engaged our attention; and, in consideration of the difficulty of the task, a prize of ten thousand florins has been offered by the Society to any one who may succeed in accomplishing it.

"Many have already tried and failed in the attempt; the prize therefore remains unclaimed, and as oddly enough the amount is identical with the sum required by you, it struck me that you might be disposed to brave the ordeal. What say you? It is a last chance, but I warn you beforehand, a very poor one."

Victor stared at the speaker in amazement.

"Do I understand rightly," he inquired, "that after eating a pigeon every day for a month I am to receive ten thousand florins?"

"Undoubtedly."

"That of course settles the matter. Provided I get the money, it signifies little how. I should have preferred relying on my intellectual rather than on my digestive faculties, but as it seems that your Society considers the brain an organ of less importance than the stomach, I have no choice. When can I begin?"

"If you have quite made up your mind," replied Herr Rieger, "I will introduce you to our president to-day, and you can begin whenever it suits you."

"The sooner the better," said Victor.

The locality in which the Society's meetings were held was on the second floor of a spacious house in one of the principal streets of the city, and on the arrival of the Doctor and his companion, they were ushered into a waiting-room, where the president, Herr Professor Langenbart, a tall, thin personage of cadaverous aspect, shortly after joined them.

Herr Rieger having briefly explained the motive of their coming, and presented Duhamel as a candidate for the pigeon prize, the professor brightened visibly, and courteously complimented the latter on his devotion to the cause of science.

"The task you are about to undertake, Herr Duhamel," he continued, "is a difficult one, as you may judge from the amount of recompense which, thanks to the ample resources of our Society, we are in a position to offer. No one has hitherto succeeded in the attempt; and it remains to be seen whether you are destined to be more fortunate, which I sincerely hope both for your sake and ours. Before, however, proceeding further, it is necessary that you should fully understand and agree to the following conditions approved by the Society, which I will now read to you."

"Firstly. The candidate for the prize engages, at a stated hour every day during an entire month, to eat a roasted pigeon, not a particle of which, the bones of course excepted, is to be left unconsumed. Two members of the committee will be present on each occasion, and will report progress every evening to the Society.

"Secondly. If the candidate succeeds in his undertaking, he will be entitled to receive ten thousand florins from the Society.

"Thirdly. Should he fail to complete the task, he cannot again compete for the prize.

"Fourthly. If he be prevented by illness from continuing the experiment, he will be allowed one hundred florins for medical expenses.

"Lastly. Should he unfortunately succumb to the ordeal, he will be buried at the cost of the Society, and the cause of his death will be inscribed in letters of gold on his tomb.

"These," concluded the professor, "are the terms of agreement. Are you disposed to accept them?"

Victor, who appeared disagreeably impressed rather than gratified by the final clause, replied curtly in the affirmative.

"In that case, Herr Duhamel," said the president, "if you have no objection, this interesting experiment may as well date from to-morrow, shall we say at three o'clock? My colleagues, Herr Commerzien-Rath Schulze and Herr Assessor Muller, will await you here at that hour, and, I trust, enjoy the enviable privilege

of ultimately recording your success."

"He will never get through it," muttered the professor, changing his tone when Victor, by no means elated by the prospect before him had left the room. Wants stamina, and looks as pale as a ghost."

"I am not so sure of that," said Herr Rieger. "He is terribly in love, and love they say, works miracles."

During the first few days of the enforced regimen, Victor, who had now become an inmate of the Doctor's house, and was consequently well cared for by his hospital entertainer, accomplished his allotted task without difficulty. But before a fortnight had expired, his energy sensibly flagged, and it was only by a strong effort that he was able to persevere. The odor of the pigeon was inexpressibly repugnant to him; his eyes were bloodshot and his lips parched with fever, stimulated by the irritating nature of the food he forced himself mechanically to swallow. On the twenty-fifth day, he was hardly recognizable; and the president, alarmed by the unfavorable report of his two colleagues, decided that in order to avoid unnecessary risk, the experiment should continue in the house of Herr Rieger, he himself and the Doctor officiating as witnesses.

The latter was still confident of success. "He has a marvellous vitality," he said to Langenbart when they were alone, "and is determined not to give in. I sounded him on the subject this morning, and his answer was: 'When a man is three quarters of the way up a hill, he never rests until he has reached the top.' And depend upon it, reach it he will."

Herr Rieger's confidence was amply justified by the result. At the expiration of the month the last pigeon had been demolished and the prize fairly and indisputably won. The president and the Society were enraptured, and unanimously agreed that an additional honorarium of five hundred florins, together with a diploma commemorative of the event, should be presented to the successful candidate, who, meanwhile, lay in a critical state, a prey to fever and delirium.

It needed all the worthy medico's skill and care to arrest the progress of the malady, and nearly three weeks had elapsed before his patient was pronounced out of danger. The turning point, however, once reached, he gained strength rapidly; and, buoyed up by the cheering prospect of speedily releasing his fondest hopes, impatiently counted the days which still separated him from Claire.

"How can I sufficiently thank you, Doctor, for all the kindness I have received at your hands?" he said one evening to his host, while the latter was busily engaged in superintending the preparations for the invalid's supper.

"By getting well as soon as possible," laughingly replied Herr Reiger. "I ought rather to thank you, for it is a glorious feather in my cap to have cured the winner of the pigeon prize!"

Two days before our hero's departure from Vienna, a general meeting of the members of the Society was convened in his honor; on which occasion the sum of ten thousand five hundred florins, together with a voluminous diploma, were formally delivered to him.

Professor Langenbart treated the assembly to a long discourse on the peculiar properties of the pigeon, considered as an article of food, in which he not unnaturally got out of his depth and floundered woefully; but wound up triumphantly by proposing, amid the enthusiastic cheers of all present, that Herr Duhamel should be elected an honorary member of the society. As a fitting conclusion to the proceedings, a serenade was given on the same evening beneath the Doctor's windows, with which the recipient of this flattering homage, completely exhausted by his previous exertions, would doubtless have willingly dispensed.

On the fourteenth of September, 1860, Victor arrived in Paris; and next morning, at nine o'clock struck, entered the well-known room in the Rue Turenne, where he found M. Mouron and his daughter sitting together, as he had left them a year ago.

"Tiens!" exclaimed the old gentleman, laying aside his newspaper. "Monsieur Victor Duhamel! I never thought you would come back."

"I told you he would, papa," said Claire, glancing fondly at her lover. "I was sure of it."

"Bless me, how thin and wan you look!" continued her father, struck with the young man's haggard air. "You have been working too hard."

"But to some purpose," answered Victor, drawing from his pocket a roll of bank-notes fresh from the money-changer's, and laying them on the table. "You see, I have kept my word."

"And I," said M. Mouron, when he had methodically counted the notes, "will keep mine. Claire is yours; but as I can't part with my little girl, we must make room for you here. As it happens, you are come in the very nick of time. My successor in the business is looking out for a partner, and with your twenty thousand francs and as much again from me, there will be a famous opening for a young couple. What say you?"

"That I am the happiest of men," cried Duhamel, cordially grasping the hand of his future father-in-law.

"Is Monsieur Victor quite sure," slily whispered Claire, "that he does not regret his year's probation.

"Regret it!" echoed her lover. "How can I, when it has brought me back to you!"

"But you wouldn't care to go through it again, I'll wager," said M. Mouron.

Victor hesitated a moment before replying:

"Few things would daunt me," he said at length, whilst a shudder ran through him. "But even for such a prize," with a gallant look at Mademoiselle Claire, "I do not think I could a second time go through such an ordeal!"

A Man with a Bag.

BY HENRY FRITH.

THE lecture was over! The audience had been attentive, then interested, and finally enthusiastic. The lecture had been a success.

As a lecturer, we—that is myself—had been firmly persuaded that the employment of balloons as a means of locomotion was not only a feasible but a necessary innovation. Full of my subject, we had stumped the provinces—we, that is my son and myself—lecturing.

Many audiences had been convinced; many others had not been convinced; some people had even laughed! But had not all great men been laughted at or scorned when they first promulgated a new idea?

On this particular evening the lecture had been given near the city. Weary, we returned home; and after a light supper retired to the little sanctum wherein we transcribed our notes of lectures, or at times, it must be confessed, dozed!

"There is a gentleman wishing to see you, sir."

"Who is he?" we asked, as we laid down our pen.

"Don't know, sir," replied the parlor-maid; "he didn't give his name. He only said, 'Tell your master a gentleman wants him.'"

"Show him in, Mary, please, if he is not a begging-letter carrier!"

In two minutes the individual was ushered into the small apartment that we, in company with our books, occupy as a study. Our visitor was a tall, rather stern-looking man, with hair turning grey. He had piercing black eyes, and a rather protuberant forehead. In his hand he carried a small box, which he laid very carefully upon the table.

We rose at his entrance, and asked his business. Might we have the honor of knowing his name also? We might.

The visitor's name was Eneas Kiampenberger. He was an inventor, a machinist, a dabbler in electrical science, and a student of "currents," atmospheric chiefly. His card declared him to be a "Professor;" and, indeed, it struck us that he did profess too much.

"I have come," said he, "to direct your attention to my model balloon. You, sir, I see by the papers, have been lecturing on balloons. They are useful things, but misunderstood. You must humor them. My balloon is of the future—the great future—which is rapidly approaching."

"Then I am afraid your invention is no use at present," we answered. "Wait till the future comes."

"Then it will no longer be future," he replied—"the present will have arrived—the present *has* arrived—in this box—for you. See!"

That my visitor was a madman I had little doubt, and to get rid of him was my first object. But this was more easily imagined than effected.

Disregarding all hints and suggestions, the Professor unpacked his box, and took out a small balloon neatly folded. From a corner he next extracted a pair of bellows, then a small battery, finally a cylinder, which he informed me contained a supply of "electric motive-power," stored and hermetically sealed, ready for use. This was his patent, and he retailed it in tins for the use of balloonists, as soup and meats are sold to families.

"My dear sir, there is scarcely time for any experiment to-night. I have an article to write."

"I have an article to exhibit," said the Professor, interrupting. "Do you see this balloon? Watch me. You must; you shall; you do!"

I did! I could not help it. I was fascinated, even as the prey of the snake is fascinated by the reptile—the mouse by the cat. I watched my visitor closely.

The Professor had inflated the balloon with the bellows; he then lighted a match, and with it a taper; this prepared gas-taper he held under the toy, and it swelled to all its graceful, rounded form. In the little car he fixed a twin-screw, and inside the car he placed a gas-stove, on which he heated some water. Steam was quickly generated, the twin-screw revolved with tremendous rapidity, and agitated a pair of side wings, or sails, like windmill sails, which beat the air spriously and regularly.

We were speechless. The balloon, now released, ascended half-way to the ceiling, and then round towards the window. The Professor ran round the table with the bellows and blew against the model, but it still made its way against the wind, which, indeed, by feeding the sails, assisted the power of the downward stroke, and propelled the balloon upwards, as a kite is sent up, but it still went on!

"There," said the Professor triumphantly, "is not that the balloon of the future?"

There could be no doubt about it. We said as much, but would it answer in practice?

"Certainly," said the inventor. "You shall see. Do you wish to be convinced?" We did.

"Very well, then," continued our strange visitor, "you *shall* be convinced. One moment, please; tell your servant not to interrupt you for an hour."

"There is no fear of that."

"Very well. But you will not be here if they do come."

"Not here!" we exclaimed; "where then?"

"In the great future," replied the Professor. "Are you afraid?"

"No."

"Grasp my hand, tighter; so. Now hold the balloon. Turn that stop-cock. Hold fast. There!"

Where? Where, indeed? The room had disappeared. The study was no more. The Professor and I were seated in the cosy car of a locomotive balloon, sailing placidly along over the Thames, as I fancied, near Richmond, but the bed of the stream was dry, or nearly so; a thin rivulet trickled down the ditch—that was all!

"You are now in the conveyance of the future," remarked my companion. "We can go anywhere—ascend or descend as we please. See, there are numbers of others."

So there were! Everywhere balloons! Large balloons, middle-sized, and small! They sailed with the wind, beat against the wind, tacked, stopped, and drove "down wind," just as the occupants pleased. Wonderful! wonderful!

Many had numbers painted on them; these, we understood, were the licensed balloons—the public carriages, in fact. Some held two individuals; some four. Some merely "tacked" about, directed by the aeronaut or driver, who wore a badge.

There were some large omnibus balloons, which also carried a dozen outside passengers, hanging on seats let down from the car, as painters hang outside houses, or inside churches. These balloons had streamers, on which were printed names, and we discerned the names of different cities on the flags of one swift, or "Express," balloon.

"Now," said the Professor, "did I deceive you? Here you are in the future. What do you think of it? Do you like the picture?"

"Passably," we answered. "But more remains to be seen and explained. Where are the trains, the steamers, the carriages and cabs?"

"They run still, but in summer are little used. The few railway companies left have now only one class of carriage, made like train-cars, and worked by electricity. Steamers are laid up generally: carriages are seldom used, except for short distances, to traverse which would entail trouble in ascending and descending if a balloon were used. Electric tricycles are much in vogue too. But the balloon, as you see, has superseded nearly all other conveyances in fine weather for distances outside the metropolitan district."

"But," we asked, "who suggested the idea? And how is this balloon locomotion managed?"

"Simply by electricity and an application of the primitive laws of physics. Our motive-power by the twin-screw propeller is electricity stored in canisters, and used as required. The sails are utilized when running before the wind; the paddles for beating to windward. I steer by moving the paddles, which catch the wind and sway the balloon. See!"

One of the great fluted paddles was, for a second, turned, and the balloon's course was altered sideways instantly, as the wind acted with greater force in one particular direction.

"Very simple, indeed," we said. "But the application must have cost you much time and labor. I always believed in it."

"You did, but there are varieties of my plan and patent. Other men have copied my method (as I appropriated your idea) in everything save some unimportant detail, and have called theirs "Safety Patent" balloons. Mine is simply the Locomotive Air Machine, as you perceive. Some balloons are luxuriously fitted up, and people go about in them for days and nights, travelling over the Continent. There is no trouble concerning passports or sea-travelling. We can also go as we please on certain tracks in this country."

"On certain tracks! Roads, do you mean?"

"Yes. Did you think they were loose?"

"Certainly I did. Then these balloons are free captives, so to speak—balloons on parole."

"Quite so. Here you see a wire. This can communicate with a weighted wheel, or cog arrangement, which runs freely in the groove made below in the ground. These little grooves intersect like train-lines, so you can be shunted anywhere you please, and go as fast as you please. This guide obviates, in a great measure, the difficulties of steering the licensed balloons which run on the public tracks, and ply for hire, at certain places."

"But we are free now?"

"Oh, yes! All private balloons are free if they please. They can be put on the line at any time, but then they must run on it till they reach a station. There is very little confusion, as nearly every one has his own balloon. On a half-holiday—we have two each week now—you will see hundreds of ladies and gentlemen, young people, and family parties, in 'Sociables,' 'Wagons,' 'Household,' or 'Family' balloons. They steer themselves almost, but if free there is no danger, for you can go up or down, and avoid a collision easily."

"The rule of the atmosphere then is 'up' and 'down,' not 'right' and 'left'?"

"Precisely. See yonder. Up goes the machine which is going down wind. Going with the wind you must get out of the way; that is the law, because you have less trouble in moving under the latter circumstances."

"Very strange. Tell me how your balloons are propelled against the wind. It seems impossible."

"Impossible? My dear sir, did you not go about lecturing on the possibility of steering the balloon, the formation of a vacuum, the perfect simplicity of the whole mode of progression? Impossible! why, you almost told us how to do it!"

"Yes, true; but you see we lecturers tell our audiences many things which we fancy *might* be done if conditions were changed. However, I was convinced we could steer and navigate the balloon if we could form a vacuum."

"That is precisely what we do," replied the Professor. "The screw underneath forms a vacuum in the air. The atoms rush in, a breeze or current is created, and the machine progresses, in fine weather."

"Yes, only in fine weather, of course?"

"Well, we do not want to go out in a thunderstorm, or in a gale of wind. You soon lose your way in the clouds, I can tell you. I think of having 'indicators' put up—indicating balloons, so that any one who loses his way in the clouds may ascertain where he is."

"Fixed balloons, I suppose. But will they remain stationary?" we asked.

"Certainly. They will be anchored as buoys are anchored. They will be illuminated at night by electricity, for the thin wires which anchor them will supply the current."

"Really you have revolutionized locomotion."

"Yes, considerably; of course we are not perfect; your old railways even were not perfect. Ballooning is rather a luxury, but our 'compressed gas,' at half-a-dime a package at the 'stores,' enables many people to keep a balloon, which is much cheaper than a carriage. Besides, the balloon elevates one!"

"Precisely; and it must tend to peace and friendship amongst nations. No army can fight in balloons."

"There is a 'balloon corps' organized. The late Mr. Coxwell was a great advocate for this. A practical man, sir, who lived too soon. I never saw him. He lived eighty years too soon. But we have a floating army instead of a standing army. The navy merely changes its 'elements,' so to speak. We perform all our business operations on the same principle. We sustain a floating debt, and suspend payment without going into liquidation."

The Professor was becoming a little "light," we fancied; and as such an "airy" tone was unbecoming, we suggested a descent to the earth again. He at once agreed, and the descent was accomplished in safety for some distance.

But, alas! for our balloon, an immense "omnibus" came racing along recklessly, and we found it impossible to turn aside, as the larger balloon was coming with the wind. We managed to get out of the way, but our vacuum screw, in some mysterious manner, became entangled in the furious current which the larger balloon created. We drifted aside, and, unfortunately, caught the thin wire of another conveyance.

A rippling, rending sound; then a furious whizzing noise. A fearful flash of lightning succeeded. The electric store had blown up! We were falling with awful rapidity to the earth. Lost! lost!

The Professor caught my hand and shook it.

"Farewell," he said. "We shall meet on earth, but shall not again recognize each other. The balloon is, at any rate, as safe as the old train. Take care of yourself!"

All very well, but the fall was terrific. We gasped, and clenched our hands. The momentum even increased, and then came a terrific bump!

Eh?—what?—where am I? In my study, and on the floor! Where is the Professor? The balloon of the future—where is it? Had I been dreaming? I rang the bell.

"Mary."

"Yes, sir."

"Has any one called—any man with a bag?"

"No, sir."

Then the balloon of the future was a dream; but, as a lecturer, I am quite convinced that balloons will eventually become universal means of locomotion, though I may not be here to see their application as the conveyance of the future.

ACCORDING TO LAW.—If a girl would, according to law, give to another an orange, instead of saying, "I give you that orange," which one would think would be what is called in legal phraseology, "an absolute conveyance of all right and title therein," the phrase should run thus:—

"I give you all and singular, my estate and interest, right, title and claim, and advantage of and in that orange, with all its rind, skin, juice, pulp and pips, with full power to bite, cut, suck, or otherwise eat the said orange, or give the same away, with or without all its rind, skin, juice, pulp and pips, anything heretofore or hereinafter or in any other deed or deeds of what nature or kind soever, to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding," and much more to the same effect.

Such is the language of lawyers; and it is gravely held by the most learned men among them that by the omission of any of those words the right and title to the said orange would not pass to the person for whose use the same was intended.

OF the true woman it is said: In prosperity she is not puffed up; in adversity she healeth the wounds of Fortune with patience. The troubles of her husband are alleviated by her counsels, and sweetened by her endearments; he putteth his heart in her bosom, and receiveth comfort. Happy is the man that hath made her his wife; happy the child that calleth her mother.

Kitty's Waterproof.

BY E. L. B.

KITTY was rather a serious-minded young woman. She had a great objection to fal-lals and pretension and display of every kind. What she called "tricks" met with no mercy at her hands. When her friends or sisters married, Kitty was expected, and, indeed, delighted, to act as bridesmaid; but still there were always periods of more or less inward contempt for the time-honored formalities without which it did not seem as though the knot could be safely tied.

"I believe, Kitty," her sisters would say "that when you are married you'll just run across to church in a waterproof and a pair of goloshes."

"Maybe I shall," Kitty would answer, composedly, "if I ever do marry. Only I don't like goloshes, and I never wear them."

Thus "Kitty's waterproof and goloshes" became quite a classic phrase in her family. Every one knew what was meant when the articles were mentioned. They became in time a sort of synonym for a certain matter-of-factness beneath which this young woman concealed a most passionately romantic nature.

For some years no opportunity presented itself for the display of these, or indeed of any other garments, on Kitty's wedding-day. No man ever succeeded in getting near enough to effect a proposal. Kitty knew her own mind well enough, and when once convinced, as she very quickly was, that the aspirant would not suit her, she lost no time in making him also aware of the fact.

"No man," Kitty sometimes said to herself, "shall ever suffer for me anything that I can spare him." Accordingly, in the most quiet, impenetrable way, she would ruthlessly nip in the bud every symptom of courtship which she did not intend to let come to maturity.

One young man, who for three mortal days, in the freedom of a large country house, pursued the unconscious Kitty throughout almost every waking hour, committed the indiscretion of pressing her hand severely as he put her into the carriage on parting. It was a revelation, and a very disagreeable one, too. No, when Kitty next met him in town, the naughty little girl proceeded to cut him dead with the most calculated deliberation.

But, although this system of persistent private snubbing gave Kitty the satisfaction of saying, when she was pressed upon a subject on which she never willingly uttered a word, that "no man had ever made her an offer in her life," the results were not satisfactory to her family, who longed to see their bright Kitty in a home of her own.

When she illuminated a Christmas text for her grandmother, with the words: "Peace on Earth," the dowager grimly remarked that she would be glad if her granddaughter would consider and practice that text.

Kitty laughed, though she could not but think the remark rather irreverent. She was fancy-free, and thought she could remain so just as long as she saw fit.

The family references to the waterproof and goloshes became fewer. Her people began to think that Kitty did not care to marry. They did not know she was only waiting. She was a wise girl, too. That passionate, loving heart would only have beaten itself to death against the bars of any but supreme affection.

And then at last the wise, self-contained, self-restrained Kitty plunged into love. I can use no other word—unconsciously, suddenly, hopelessly, irretrievably, she was gone, as such girls will go. She made a gallant fight for it; but when she yielded it was as frankly, as generously, as utterly as any woman ever did.

Now was the time of her family's triumph. Her eldest sister, suitably and sensibly married long ago, devoted herself with the conscientious fervor of a Griselda ardently to the trousseau. To see Kitty arrayed in wedding finery and going through the prescribed functions with decorum, would have in it the spice of irony which is pleasing to the human heart.

Kitty surrendered herself with fairly good grace. After all, what did these things matter? By the side of her great love, they seemed as nothing; she could put up with anything for the sake of that. But sometimes when dressmakers and milliners tormented her over-much, she would say, "Take care. Perhaps I shall do you all yet, and be married in a waterproof and pair of goloshes."

Poor little Kitty! one day a thunder-cloud gathered in her blue sky. Her betrothed was a soldier, and they were living in troublous times. At first, in the sheltered nook of her happy home, Kitty paid but little heed to the wars and rumors of wars which were darkening all the sky. But her Jack was becoming nervously anxious, beyond the anxiety of even ordinary bridegrooms, to hurry on the wedding-day.

"We can never tell what may happen," he would say; and when it once dawned on Kitty's mind that war might break out, and he might be ordered abroad, she was as keen as he. Her home was not so many miles from London; her lover was at Portsmouth. The banns were duly "put up" in both places, and preparations went on apace.

So did public events. Rumor was busy enough, but fact was busier still. The wedding was to be on Thursday; Jack, hurried and driven with work and anxiety, was to arrive Wednesday night. The short honeymoon was to be spent in the Isle of Wight. After that, who knew what might happen?

Still, it was to be a very gay wedding. That Kitty should be married at last was delightful to everyone.

The whole house was in the chaos which precedes these events, when on Monday night a telegram arrived:

"An appointment which it is impossible to refuse. I must sail in thirty-six hours. Will you come to me?"

Instantly Kitty telegraphed back:

"I will," giving the first train by which she could arrive.

"Oh, Kitty," cried her sisters, "and you won't be married at all!"

"I'm not so sure of that," said Kitty, from between her white lips. "I shall see what Jack wants."

"But how can you be married, with all your things here?"

"Fiddlesticks!" cried Kitty, bursting into tears. "At least I can get a waterproof and a pair of goloshes."

Her mother was too much of an invalid for sudden expeditions, so it was with her eldest sister that Kitty started on her sorrowful journey the first thing in the morning. It was barely light as they drove up to the station, and a thick, drizzling rain was falling. Kitty laughed hysterically as the footman handed in their rugs and wraps.

"It's all working up to the waterproof, Eleanor," she said. "Thomas, didn't Susan give you any goloshes?"

"Hush!" said the demure elder sister. "You are forgetting yourself, Kitty."

"There, let me be, Nellie," said the poor little bride, overwhelmed with penitence. "Don't talk to me or scold me. I'm worn out. I never slept one wink all night."

Eleanor wrapped her up tenderly and thoughtfully, urging her to try and sleep now.

"No, I can never sleep in the train, but I'll keep still."

The two sisters travelled on in silence. Neither had slept an hour during that night of anxiety and bustle. Eleanor's soft, monotonous breathing soon showed that she was away in the land of dreams.

Kitty mused and cried a little, and mused again. As she grew calmer, she went over all the incidents of her sweet, short courtship, pictured the look, the word, the touch which would dwell forever in her memory; wondered what Jack would really want her to do, never doubting for a moment but that his will, whatever it was, would be her own; wondered and fretted a little as to whether he would be at the station to meet them.

Might there not be a mistake? Would he have got her telegram? Could he get away to meet the train? They ought to be there about ten o'clock. Could he come? What would he be doing then? She tried to calculate—lost herself—began again—dropped off. Yes, she was asleep too, worn out with weariness, though she "never slept in the train."

An awful crash! A noise as of a thousand guns going off at once! A shock which threw her sister and herself violently into each other's arms, and then darkness, and a slow, horrible grinding and crashing.

"Where are we? What is it? Oh, my darling! are you hurt?" And then breathless inquiries and murmured thanksgivings as, excepting for a few bruises, each found the other untouched.

"It must be an awful accident, and in a tunnel, too! Oh, horrible! how horrible!"

Presently things began to clear a little. People came kindly and sympathizingly to help and encourage. In such extremities it was found possible to speak without an introduction.

They were almost at the end of the tunnel. The dim light came struggling in over a heap of piled up debris. A luggage-train had broken down in the very mouth of the tunnel, into which their own had crashed. Mercifully, their driver had seen the danger in time to shut off the steam.

No lives were lost, though most of the passengers were bruised and shaken, and many considerably injured. For the present, till the wreckage was cleared away, it was simply impossible to get in or out of the tunnel. Messengers had been sent back to block the way behind, and all that remained was patience.

Kitty sat like a statue. When at last a light was brought to replace their own, which had been extinguished in the shock, her first look was at her watch. It was already far past ten. Her silent thought all along had been that, if Jack wished her to marry him that day, there would be plenty of time before twelve o'clock.

What if this accident should make them too late? She heard that they were more than a mile from the station, and that a breakdown gang would soon be on the spot to set them free. Kitty pictured Jack's anguish when he should hear at the station that their train was wrecked. The moments were like hours, and there was nothing to do but wait.

"No, there are plenty attending to them," had been the reply to Eleanor's wish to help the sufferers. "More people will only hinder. You ladies had better sit still in your places." And the advice had been backed by the authority to which they felt obliged to defer.

Kitty would have given anything to get to the front; she felt as though she could have torn down the wreckage with her own hands to get free. Half-past ten came—a quarter to eleven—eleven. The gang were working well; they could hear the noise and the crash of their strokes, but no one came near them.

As yet no one had got in or out of the tunnel. A quarter-past eleven! Kitty put her head down at last, and sobbed in the despair of her heart. Eleanor was on her knees on the floor searching in the general hash for the sandwiches which she knew must be somewhere. She had yet faith in the reviving effects of food.

And then there came the flash of a lantern in the open doorway, and the bright cheery voice—

"Kitty, my Kitty, is it you? Come along, I can drag you over. Ah, Eleanor, how good of you!"

Kitty never knew how she was dragged out of the car, down the line amongst wood and splinters and twisted wheels and torn-up rails, and then breathlessly over the heaps of wreckage in the entrance.

She was the first lady who was got out. Kind, willing hands helped and lifted her along. Somehow people seemed to know that the young lady was coming in all haste to marry her soldier-lover, and they had strained every nerve to extricate her in time.

"God A'mighty bless ye, Miss," said a laborer, as he lifted her over the last heap of rubbish, and they struggled out into air and light. Jack caught the words, and turned back to put a good-sized coin into the man's hard hand. Then he drew Kitty aside, looking down tenderly into the clear eyes.

"Love," he said, "I sail to-morrow morning. It is duty. Will you marry me to-day?"

"I will."

"Then we must run for it. Come along as fast as ever you can go. No, it's no good waiting for the train to Hart; it'll be hours before they get them all out. We must run for it. They are waiting for us at the church. Never mind Eleanor. Vaughan will see to her, and bring her along."

He had taken her by the hand, and they were running on together down the line as fast as Kitty could stumble along.

"I wish I could carry you," said Jack, presently. "This is a runaway match, truly. Oh, did you think to bring the certificate of your banns, or it's all up with us?"

Kitty could only nod.

"Brave little woman! There, don't waste your breath. There's a level crossing a little farther on," he said at last. "We'll cut away there, and get quicker to the church than if we went on to the station. If we could only find a cab there! Here we are."

He pulled up short at the gate. The good woman at the little gate-house was standing in her doorway, looking up the line for news from the scene of the accident. Kitty was forced to lean against the post for a moment to get her breath.

"Eh, dearie," she said, "but you be most drownded. Come ye in, and rest and dry ye."

Kitty only shook her head.

"Can't stop," cried Jack. "Can't you find me a cab? That'd be the best thing you could do for us."

"Lor, no, Sir. There's ne'er a one anywheres about. These wet days they're hard to come by out here. But where be ye going?"

"Only as far as the church."

"Eh, but that's a good step, and the lady's boots is nigh torn off her feet, and in all this soaking rain too. Stop a minute, my dear, my goloshes is here in the porch. Slip 'em on now, quick, and on you go."

Just before the church clock began to boom out the hour of twelve, Eleanor and Jack's brother-officer, panted dripping up the aisle in time to see the ring slipped upon Kitty's finger; and, as the last stroke fell, the solemn words were spoken which pronounced that they were man and wife together.

* * * * * *

"Oh, Eleanor," said Kitty, as she turned away from the rails on her husband's arm, "to think that, after all, I should have been married in a water-proof and pair of goloshes!"

THE FORTUNE OF THE HAND.—There is a fixed method of divining "the fortune of the hand," and a little study and practice will suffice to make anyone a fortune-teller. Here are some of the rules:—Open the left hand. Halfway between the thumb and forefinger there begins, on the very edge of the palm, a line which runs in a quarter circle to the middle of the wrist. If it be unbroken and clearly marked, it indicates long life and health. From the same point joining it another line runs through the middle of the palm. This is the line of the head or of intellect. Almost parallel with it there is a third line beginning on the other side below the little finger, and leading, when well developed, to the root of the forefinger. This is the line of the heart. If clear, deep, and even, it indicates a great capacity for honorable love and warm affections.

It is most favorable when this line, as well as that of the head, have a fork or branch at the end. When a large triangle is formed by the lines of life, the head and the liver, with one even right angle and two acute angles, it indicates breath and energy of character. If this triangle be divided into two by the line of fate, the subject will be susceptible of high intellectual culture; if the lesser triangle contain one or two more there will be a genius, and a capacity for knowledge. A line from the ring-finger downwards is a sign of a gift for art in one or all branches. Lines on the wrist are called the bracelet of Venus, and are said by some chiromancers to indicate each thirty years of life.

A GENTLEMAN whose conquests in the female world were numberless, at last married. "Now, my dear," said his better half, "I hope, since you are no longer a bachelor, that you will amend your ways." "You may depend upon it, madam," says he, this is my last folly."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

In Liverpool, the Bishop of Salford says, the returns showed that one in every seven deaths took place in the workhouse, and in the township of Manchester the returns showed that one in every five deaths took place in the workhouse. The official returns showed that there were 800,000 paupers in England and Wales. He had found, however, after referring for information to the Manchester Board of Guardians, that the number was about 2,600,000, or one in every eleven was a pauper.

Evidently high station does not exempt its occupant from the common troubles of humanity. A medical paper remarks that the Emperor William is suffering from advancing years, the Crown Prince from a laryngeal cancer, and Bismarck from the rheumatism; Mr. Gladstone has catarrhal troubles of his respiratory organs; Sir Michael Hicks-Beach has cataracts; Mr. Parnell has some unknown malady, which makes him an invalid; Lord Randolph Churchill married an American lady, and has the (alleged) American disease, nervousness; Mr. Blaine is reported to have Bright's disease; Mr. Manning is paralytic; President Cleveland is rheumatic, and the Emperor of Russia is suffering from mental depression.

Some hope is said to be now felt for the mental recovery of the unfortunate Empress Carlotta, whose husband was shot dead in 1866. She has as an attendant a young Austrian lady, who seated herself lately at a piano, after the Empress had retired to her apartments for the night, and played, among other things, the Mexican national hymn. Just as she was finishing the last bars the Empress suddenly appeared at the door of the room. She gave a piercing cry, uttered her husband's name, and fell senseless to the floor. This is the first indication which she has given for several years of any reminiscence of the terrible catastrophe which cost her the loss of reason; and her physicians base favorable anticipations on the incident. From other sources the assertion is repeated that her case is absolutely hopeless, and that her tragic life will soon draw to a close.

A single discovery in chemistry, a new application of photography, a novel use of electricity, is liable to change at once the methods in vogue in a whole group of industries, to render useless costly machinery and painfully acquired skill. Hence all who take interest in the kind of education to be given in the common schools of America, may well demand that such training shall be given the youth of the rising generation as will best enable them to meet the ever-shifting conditions which must inevitably result from the new discoveries, which now seem always impending. To teach a trade which the next invention may destroy, to train a pupil in the technical skill of a particular industry, of which the next discovery may make an end, seems plainly a waste of time.

The fiscal year of the Union closed on the 30th of June. The receipts from all sources were $371,389,894, which is more than a million a day, and, excluding Sundays and holidays, is more than $1,200,000 per day. There was in round numbers an increase in the receipts over the fiscal year closing June 30, 1886, of $35,000,000, and of this $22,000,000 came from customs duties alone. During the year the national debt was reduced $109,707,646.38. And this, in face of larger expenditures than in previous years, and in face, also, of recent modifications in both the customs and internal revenue laws, supposed to be in the line of decreased receipts. But, as a matter of fact, both branches of taxation are yielding the Government larger and larger revenues. The excess of revenue over expenditures amounted to $105,000,000. This is a showing no other nation in the world can make, and it is one of which we may justly be proud.

One of the fashionable little "fads" of the day is a Noah's Ark quilt. The quilt can be of serge, cloth, satin, sheeting, or plain cream sheeting, and is designed and commenced by the lady who starts it. If she is a good worker, she embroiders or appliques the Noah's Ark, which is near the centre of the quilt, but placed high up. The animals are all in couples and form a long procession around the entire quilt, marching around towards the ark. Sometimes the procession is curved, so as to form a design over the entire surface, but this depends on individual taste and fancy. The lady asks her friends and neighbors to work the pairs of animals, giving them some choice in the matter. In cream sheeting the animals may be all in red Turkey twill, worked with red ingrained thread, or in various colors. This may be an idea for many busy fingers. The baby's crawling blankets or cot coverlids, probably gave the idea of the Noah's Ark quilt, and also suggested the same style of perambulator cover. The animals are generally cut out in paper first, and then in whatever material they are to be worked in, and are copied from a child's colored picture book. In the Noah's Ark collection scraps of fur and skin are used, to represent the specimen as true to nature as possible.

LADY BURDETT COUTTS is said to have been received back into Queen Victoria's favor. Since her marriage to her youthful husband the baroness has been persistently snubbed at court.

Our Young Folks.

THE CRAB AND THE CRANE.

BY THEO. GIFT.

ONCE upon a time, in a pleasant country where the sun is far hotter than it ever is here, and where lions roar in the night-time, and clumsy, long-trunked elephants stump about in the forests, there lived a crane in a big nest, which was made of sticks and fixed in the trunk of an old willow-tree.

Now cranes feed upon fish—when they can get them, that is, for a crane is a very greedy bird, and will eat anything—worms, or snakes, or insects—that ever comes in its way.

Well, one day as the crane was flying along, he came to a little pond in which a number of fish were swimming about.

He could see them quite plainly, for as the summer was very hot, and the pond rather shallow, the sun had dried up a good deal of the water in it, leaving the fishes all clearly in view, and the sight made him so hungry, though he had only just finished an excellent breakfast of half-a-dozen frogs and a fat eel, that he did not know what to do with himself.

Of course he could have swooped down and caught one of them in his long beak; but that would have frightened the others, who would all have gone and huddled together in the deepest part of the pond, where he could not reach them; and what he wanted, seeing so many, was to have them all, so he stood on the edge of the pond on one leg, with the other doubled up and his head bent on one side, thinking how he should manage it, until at last a little fish—a very young one, who didn't know anything about cranes—saw him, and swimming up to the top of the water, asked—

"Noble sir, is anything troubling you, that you sit there thinking so hard?"

"Why, yes," said the crane, "for I am thinking about you; and I assure you the thought troubles me very much."

"About us?" said the little fish. "Why, good sir, what can trouble your majestic head about such small creatures as we are?"

"Only this," answered the crane; "that since I last came here the sun has dried up quite half the water in this little pond of yours. In a few more days it will be dried up altogether, and you will be left baking on the hot mud. It will be very terrible for you."

"Terrible indeed! Why, what shall we do?" cried the little fish.

"Well, that's what I have been thinking," said the crane; "and I think I have hit upon a plan. Close by here is another pond, a much larger and deeper one, which never dries up through the hottest summer; and as I am a very good-natured fellow, if you and your friends will come near enough for me to take you up in my beak, I don't mind carrying you there."

The little fish thought this was extremely good-natured, and swam off to tell his friends; and all the young ones said, "How kind of the crane," and the old ones said, "Who ever heard of a crane being kind to fish? Depend upon it, what he wants is just to get us and eat us!" and this they said so loudly that the crane heard them.

"Eat you?" said he. "No, I, indeed! I have more food already than I can manage, without you; and to tell you the truth, though I don't wish to offend you, you are a sort of fish which doesn't agree with me, and which I would in town always prefer. However, do as you like, only, if you wish to see that I am speaking the truth, just send one of your number with me, and he will tell you so himself."

The fishes thought this was a very good idea, and they chose out one of their comrades—a thin bony fish called Goby, very unpleasant to eat, and supposed to be very cunning, because he had only one eye, which he could turn right round in his head—and commissioned him to go with the crane, and report on the truth of his story.

So the crane lifted Mr. Goby, who didn't like the errand at all, very gently in his beak, and flew off with him to a beautiful deep pond close by, kept cool and shaded by tall trees, and full of delicious water-flies and grubs, such as fish love to dine on, and having dropped the old fellow into it, and set him swimming about for a while, and rolling his big eye around as much as he liked, he took him up again, and carried him quite safely back again to his friends in the little pond.

Then the Goby told the other fishes that it was all perfectly true about the other pond, and what a delightful place it was, and on hearing him the other fishes all declared they would be only too glad to go there, and begged the crane's pardon very humbly for doubting him.

"Don't mention it," said the crane in the most polite way.

And taking up the first fish that came, he flew away with him to the other pond, and alighted on the stump of an old willow-tree which grew near it.

But when he had done this he did not drop the fish into the water as he had done the last, but flung it down on a branch of the tree, and driving his sharp beak through it, killed it and ate it up in a moment, and then flew back for another.

This he served in the same way, and so he did another and another, until he had made a capital meal; and even then, he was not satisfied.

"For," said he to himself, "I may as well have the rest to keep in my larder against the next time I am hungry."

So he went on bringing more and more, only instead of killing those at once he threw the poor fishes down into his nest, the sharp sticks of which hurt them dreadfully, and where they writhed about in misery, quite unable to escape.

It happened, however, that when he went back on one of these journeys he chanced to see a fine large crab in the little pond, and being very fond of "crab" for supper, he said—

"Come, my good crab, all the fishes are as happy as peacocks in the big pond over there. They only want you to keep them company; so hurry up, and I will take you to them."

"All right," said the crab; "but how will you get me there, I want to ask? I am too hard and round for you to take hold of, you know."

"Oh, I'll grip you tightly with my beak," said the crane. "Never fear."

"Your beak isn't wide enough."

"Not wide enough? Nonsense! Why, just look at the size of it. You'll be as safe as if you were in your own bed."

So the crab looked; but as he did so he saw some of the blood and scales of the poor murdered fishes sticking to the crane's feathers, and being a very wise crab, he guessed at once what had happened. Nevertheless, he was not at all afraid, but said quite pleasantly—

"Your beak may be big, good Mr. Crane, but my shell is too smooth and slippery, I shall certainly fall out of it unless you will let me catch hold of your neck in my claws. We crabs can hold on pretty tight with them, and in that way you can carry me easily."

"Oh, any way you please," said the crane, who was in a hurry for his supper.

So the crab caught hold of his neck very securely and off they flew together, till they came to the larger pond, where the crane was just turning around as usual to the willow-tree, when the crab exclaimed—

"Look out, noble sir, you are going the wrong way. Here is the pond, and you seem just going to pass it."

"Oh, indeed!" said the crane with a cruel laugh. "Do you imagine that I, whom you call 'noble sir,' am nothing but a nurse-maid, to carry you and a lot of miserable fishes about for your pleasure? Pray look at those of your scaly friends who are wriggling about in my nest there, and at that heap of bones below. As I have served the fishes, my dear friend, I am going to serve you."

"Are you?" said the crab, quietly. "Now, do you know, I think you are not going to do any such thing? Those poor fishes have been punished for their folly in trusting you; but I didn't trust you at all. On the contrary you have trusted me, and now you shall be punished in your turn. Try to throw me down and eat me, if you like; but take care, for before you can do so I will bite your neck in two with my sharp nippers, and kill you in a trice."

And as he spoke he suddenly gave the crane's neck such a sharp bite that the cruel bird very nearly choked, and then, frightened half out of his life, cried out—

"Indeed, my dear friend, I was only in a joke. I had no thought of eating you in reality; so pray let me go, and I will pop you into the water at once."

"Wait a bit," said the crab. "There are other people whom you have been joking with who have got to be attended to first. What about those bones at the foot of the tree?"

"Oh, my dear crab, those are some bones which a strange bird flying by dropped in passing. Believe me, I have nothing to do with them."

"And what about those poor fish, still alive, who are writhing in that nest of yours among the boughs?"

"Oh, my dear crab, they are only there because as I was going to put them in the pond it occurred to me that it would be very rude to allow mere common fishes to enter the water before a person of your rank and dignity, so I just set them down while I went back to attend to your lordship."

"Oh, is that so?" said the crab; "I am not at all particular about my rank and dignity; so if what you say is true, take them up one-by one now, and put them carefully into the pond before you trouble yourself about me."

And as he still held the crane very tightly, the latter was obliged to obey; and lifting the poor fishes in his beak, carried them to the pond, into which they dropped straightway, and swam off rejoicing.

"And now, friend crab, let go," said the crane, his eyes glittering with anger; for, indeed, he was in a furious rage at being robbed of his prey, and though he spoke so pleasantly, what he meant in his heart was to pounce on the crab the moment he let go, and crush him to death upon a large stone.

"Nay, bend down your head, that I may step on to the ground comfortably," said the crab. "You are so tall that if I let go now I might tumble into the mud and hurt myself, or dirty my shell, neither of which I should care for."

"You are a little difficult to please, my friend," answered the crane; "but have it as you like."

And so saying, he bent his head gracefully to the ground, when in the same moment the crab closed his sharp jaws with such a nip that the crane jumped nearly a yard into the air, and before he could even come down again, or get his features straight, the crab had disappeared in the water and was safe out of his reach.

(Don't you know why? Ah, well, you just get a fine big crab, and put your fingers between his nippers, and you will learn!)

"Now you may go and look for the bird that dropped those fish-bones," said the crab, laughing, and scuttled away to join his companions.

BASIL'S SISTER.

BY A. S. PENN.

"YOU are getting a big boy now, Basil," said his father, as he bade him "Good-bye;" "and you must take care of your little sister. Mind that she doesn't stay out too late in the evening, or catch cold by walking in the wet grass."

"Yes, papa," said Basil, holding Trixie's small fat hand in his in a protecting way. "I'll take great care of her, I promise."

Mr. Barclay patted him on the head, kissed Trixie again, then sprang into the station-fly, and was driven away.

Every summer these two children were brought down from town to stay for a month with their old nurse, Mrs. Baker, whose husband had a little farm in a pretty country village. They were always pale when they came, and rosy and brown when they went back.

Mrs. Baker was usually busy for a great part of the day, and the children were allowed to roam about as they pleased in the woods and fields.

For the first few days Basil remembered all that his father had said. After their early morning walks he took off Trixie's boots to see that her feet were not wet with the heavy dew; when they went out in the hottest part of the day he led her into the shady places under the trees; and when they came in very warm from running he would not let her sit in a draught by the open window or door.

But soon other things became so interesting to Basil that he forgot to think so much of Trixie. In the field near the house was a new calf, whose gambols he was never tired of watching; and in the hen-house some new chickens were being hatched one by one.

His little sister was afraid of the calf, and would not go with him to see it, and he did not tell her about the chickens, for he knew she would want to hold them continually in her hands or her lap, as she did the kitten at home, and nurse had said they were not to be touched. Basil himself was content to sit and watch them when they peeped out now and then from under their mother's wings.

This was how it happened that one morning, directly breakfast was over, he stole away without telling Trixie where he was going, taking a little bread from his bread and milk in his hand. He went straight to the hen-house, shut the door from inside, and sat down on an empty coop opposite the nest on which the old hen was sitting.

It was so delightful to feed her with the bits of soaked bread, to hear her call to the tiny chickens, and to see them run out from under her wings and peck the food from her beak, that he sat there for hours, forgetting even to wonder what Trixie was doing all the while.

Once or twice Mrs. Baker came in with a little chopped egg or oatmeal for the chickens, but when he heard her footstep Basil slipped behind the door, so that she never knew he was there.

At last he began to feel hungry.

"It must be dinner-time," he said to himself. "I'll find Trix, and we'll go in."

He left the fowl-yard, and ran into the large field where they most often played together, calling, "Trix—ie—e—e! Trix!" as he went. There was no answer: but at the further end he saw something pink, like the little girl's frock. He walked slowly towards it, still shouting her name, and expecting to see her spring up and run to meet him.

The sun was now glaring down so fiercely upon him that he felt almost blinded, having been so long in the cool twilight of the poultry house.

As he drew nearer he could see that it was really Trixie lying as if asleep in the full glare of the sun, in which her golden hair looked dazzlingly bright. She had no hat, for Basil, on the evening before, had hung it on a peg out of her reach.

He gathered a flower as he went, and when he reached her, sat down on the grass and drew it lightly over her forehead to wake her.

But Trixie did not move, though he tickled her by drawing the flower-petals here and there over her eyelids, nose and mouth. At last he shook her gently.

"Trix! Trix! Wake up; it is dinner-time!" he cried, trying to lift her, but her head fell back, and she did not hear or see him. Basil began to be frightened, and made an attempt to carry her home, but she was far too heavy. Giving this up, he ran towards the house screaming, "Nurse! nurse!" at the top of his voice.

Mrs. Baker came in a hurry: little Trixie was carried in, and the doctor was sent for. Basil saw her hat on the peg as he went in, and guessed what was the matter. His little sister had been out for hours with the hot sun beating down on her head, until it had made her dangerously ill.

Their father and mother were sent for. Basil wondered that they never reproached or scolded him for his carelessness during all those weeks while Trixie lay ill, nor even after she began to get better and was brought down-stairs, so white and thin that no one would have known her. It was all his fault he knew, and he was willing to be punished.

But Mr. and Mrs. Barclay could see that the boy needed no other punishment than their anxious looks, and the sight of Trixie's hollow eyes and sharp-pointed little face. He was so miserable that young as he was, he could never bear to recall that time in all his after life.

MARRIAGE BY THE GLOVE.—Marriage by the glove is common in Holland, and is caused by the fact that many of the eligible young men, after having finished their education in the schools of the fatherland, depart for Dutch India to engage in some lucrative commercial enterprise or to accept a position in the colonial service. The scarcity of marriageable white women in that clime induces the would-be husband to write to a friend in Holland, enclosing his wish for a wife. The friend selects a willing young lady, generally with a substantial dowry, and otherwise conforming closely to the specifications of the letter. A photograph of the favored one is enclosed in the return epistle. After the lapse of a few months, a soiled left-hand glove, with a power of attorney, is received from the far-away bachelor. The friend in Holland marries the selected bride in precisely the same manner as if he were the actual groom, and the young wife departs in the next India mail steamer to bring happiness and prosperity to the lonely one in the far East. A marriage of this description is as binding as if the bridegroom were present, and never repudiated. If either party to the glove-marriage should die before meeting in India, the survivor would share the property of deceased in accordance with the laws.

ON NOVELTY.—One advantage of our inclination for novelty is, that it annihilates all the boasted distinctions among mankind. Look not up with envy to those above thee! Sounding titles, stately buildings, fine gardens, gilded chariots, rich equipages, what are they? They dazzle every one but the possessor; to him that is accustomed to them they are cheap and regardless things; they supply him not with brighter images or more sublime satisfactions, than the plain man may have, whose small estate will just enable him to support the charge of a simple, unencumbered life.

He enters needless into his rooms of state, as you or I do under our poor sheds. The noble paintings and costly furniture are lost on him; he sees them not; as how can it be otherwise, when by custom a fabric infinitely more grand and finished, that of the universe, stands unobserved by the inhabitants, and the everlasting lamps of heaven are lighted up in vain, for any notice that mortals take of them? Thanks to indulgent nature, which not only placed her children originally upon a level, but still, by the strength of this principle, in a great measure preserves it, in spite of all the care of man to introduce artificial distinctions.

TALBOT.

PARTLY EATEN ALIVE.—As a young officer doing duty with a Madras cavalry regiment, Sir Edward Bradford, an English soldier, was a keen sportsman. One day when tiger shooting he "missed his mark," and soon found himself in a tiger's clutches. It was an anxious moment, few of his friends being at hand. As a sportsman of experience, Sir Edward knew well that his best course was to lie quietly and sham death. The tiger surveyed his prey, looked around, and, thinking all was safe, set steadily to work to make its meal. Taking the young officer's hand in his mouth it was steadily disposed of, and the arm eaten to the elbow, before Sir Edward's friends came up and released him. The cool resolution of the man in feigning death had been the means of saving his life, for as Sir Edward says when telling the story, had he moved, or uttered even a groan, the tiger would have put an end to his existence before going on with his repast. Of course the shattered arm had to be removed from the shoulder. It may be imagined what the suffering was which the victim endured while lying quite conscious, in the power of a voracious "man-eater."

SILENCE.—Half the actual trouble of life would be saved if people would remember that silence is golden—when they are irritated, vexed or annoyed. To feel provoked or exasperated at a trifle, when the nerves are exhausted, is perhaps natural to us in our imperfectly sanctified state. But why put the annoyance into the shape of speech, which once uttered is remembered, which may burn like a blistering wound, or rankle like a poisoned arrow?

If a child be trying, or a friend capricious, or a servant unreasonable, be careful what you say. Do not speak while you feel the impulse of anger, for you will be almost certain to say too much, to say more than your cooler judgment will approve, and to speak in a way that you will regret.

Be silent until the "sweet by and by," when you shall be calm, rested and self controlled.

It would take eighteen states as large as Spain, thirty-one states as large as Italy, or sixty states as large as England and Wales, to form a territory as large as that of the United States. If we should take five of our first class powers of Europe—Great Britain and Ireland, Germany, France, Austria and Italy—and add to them Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Denmark or Greece and combine into one mighty empire, the piece of territory thus formed could be laid down time after time, in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains.

It is claimed that when hogs are turned on old sod land they will clean out the cut-worms and grubs, provided they be not prevented from rooting by "ringing."

By using artificial comb, one half the labor will be saved to the bees, as they must first make the new comb before they can get to work on honey.

LONELINESS.

BY SHIRLEY WYNNE.

Alone amidst the busy crowd,
The merry groups, the loving pairs,
With mournful eyes and forehead bowed
I pass alone, and no one cares.

Joyous and gay they laugh and talk—
Voice answers voice, eye answers eye:
Unknown, unloved, alone I walk,
Companionless until I die!

Alone beside a lonely hearth:
Others, round many a household fire,
Pass round the jest, join in the mirth,
Or with sweet words draw loved ones nigher.

No laugh, no sweet word cheers my gloom,
My house is left me desolate;
Only dim shadows haunt the room,
And only Sorrow is my mate.

* * * * * *

Behold them where they wait to bless,
To greet thee on thy weary way!
Thou need'st not be companionless—
Angels may walk with thee to-day!

Go to the lanes and highways; seek
Those who art sadder than thou art—
More worn, more storm-tossed, yet more weak,
From the gay throng yet more apart.

The widow and the orphan find,
The old and lonely, those who know
Not health nor hope, the lame and blind—
Waifs on Life's sea flung to and fro.

Oh, let them share thy lonely hearth,
Lonely no more, no more, to be!
Yea, thou shalt laugh and sing for mirth,
And angels come and sup with thee!

ABOUT OSCULATION.

The subject of this article, as stated above, is osculation; and osculation is—not to put too fine a point upon it—kissing. Further definition is, we take it, unnecessary.

Kisses, according to Sam Slick, are like creation, because they are made out of nothing and are very good. Another wag says they are like sermons—they require two heads and an application. An ingenious American grammarian thus conjugates the verb: "Buss, to kiss; rebus, to kiss again; pluribus, to kiss without regard to number; sillybus, to kiss the hand instead of the lips; blunderbus, to kiss the wrong person; omnibus, to kiss every person in the room; crebus, to kiss in the dark."

But kissing baffles all attempts at analysis, and Josh Billings is pretty accurate when he says, "that the more a man tries to analyze a kiss, the more he can't; and that the best way to define a kiss is to take one."

We find in the time of James I., the Constable of Spain bestowed a kiss upon each of Anne of Denmark's maids of honor "according to the custom of the country, any neglect of which is taken as an affront." Bunyan, the immortal tinker, strongly reprobated the practice which had grown to such lengths; and asked its defenders "why they made baulks? Why they saluted the most handsome, and let the ill-favored ones go?"

In France the custom found great favor. To a foreigner, full of reserve, there is something unmanly in the way men at public railway stations, in France, salute each other on both cheeks; and yet, in England itself, it was, at one time, the recognised form of salutation. Not only was it usual for a gentleman to kiss a lady, but it was ceremonious for the sterner sex to thus salute each other.

In Wesley's Journal, dated June 16th, 1758, we find a remarkable instance of this, in a description of a duel between two officers at Limerick: "Mr. B. proposed firing at twelve yards, but Mr. J. said, 'No, six is enough.' So they kissed one another (poor farce!), and before they were five paces asunder, both fired at the same instant."

Hone, in his quaint old Table-Book, gives an account of a curious kissing festival held in Ireland: "On Easter Monday, several hundreds of young persons of the town and neighborhood of Portsferry, County Down, resort, dressed in their best, to a pleasant walk near the town called 'The Walter.' The avowed object of each person is to see the fun, which consists of the men kissing the females without reserve, whether married or single. This mode of salutation is quite a matter of course; it is never taken amiss, nor with much show of coyness. The female must be ordinary, indeed, who returns home without having received at least a dozen hearty busses."

Kissing under the mistletoe is a custom of very remote origin, and a practice too common to be dealt with here, though it may not, perhaps, be known that, owing to the licentious revelry to which it gave occasion, mistletoe was formerly excluded by ecclesiastic order, from the decoration of the church at Christmas-time. Hone tells us that there was an old belief, that unless a maiden was kissed under the mistletoe at Christmas she would not be married during the ensuing year.

In the ceremonial of betrothal a kiss has played an important part in several nations. A nuptial kiss in church, at the conclusion of the marriage service, is solemnly enjoined by the York Missal and the Sarum Manual.

When ladies' lips were at the service of all, it became usual to have fragrant-scented comfits or sweets, of which we find frequent mention, and as a common civility of daily intercourse, it is not to be wondered at that it should find its way into the courtesies of dancing; and thus we learn that a "kiss was, anciently, the established fee of a lady's partner."

Brand, in his "Popular Antiquities," tells us that the custom of kissing in dancing is still prevalent in many parts of the country. "When the fiddler thinks his young couples have had music enough, he makes his instrument squeak out two notes, which all understand to say, 'Kiss her!'"

In Russia the Easter salutation is a kiss. Each member of the family salutes the other; chance acquaintances on meeting kiss; principals kiss their employes; the General kisses his officers; the officers kiss their soldiers; the Czar kisses his family, retinue, court and attendants, and even his officers on parade, the sentinels at the palace gates, and a select party of private soldiers—probably elaborately prepared for this "royal salute." The poorest serf, meeting a high-born dame in the street, has but to say "Christ is risen," and he will receive a kiss and the reply "He is risen truly."

In Finland, according to Bayard Taylor, the women resent as an insult a salute upon the lips. A Finnish matron, hearing of our American custom of kissing, declared that did her husband attempt such a liberty, she would treat him to such a box upon the ears that he would not readily forget.

The code of Justinian says "that if a man betrothed a woman by the kiss, and either party died before marriage, the heirs were entitled to half the donations and the survivor to the other half; but if the contract was made without the solemn kiss, the whole of the espousal gifts must be restored to the donors and their heirs at-law."

Kissing in many religions has played its part as a mark of adoration or veneration. In Hosea xiii. 2, speaking of idolatry, we find the sentence: "Let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves."

Grains of Gold.

Ignorance is a prolonged infancy.

Coarse kindness is at least better than coarse anger.

Proud hearts and lofty mountains are always barren.

Revenge, however sweet, always costs more than it is worth.

Be not forward to assign reasons to those who have no right to ask.

If a man repents he don't have to try to believe; it comes of itself.

Great good is often unaccomplished because it is not attempted.

Judge no man because the disposition of his mind is not like your own.

He who is most charitable in his judgment is generally the least unjust.

Whatever you do, take a hearty interest in it, or be assured you will certainly fail.

It isn't so much what a man has that makes him happy as it is what he doesn't want.

You can't make friends with God until you're sorry enough for your sins to quit them.

Garner up pleasant thoughts in your mind; for pleasant thoughts make pleasant lives.

The most delicate, the most sensible of all pleasures consists in promoting the pleasures of others.

A sound discretion is not so much indicated by never making a mistake as by never repeating it.

The best teachers are those who learn something new themselves every day, and are not ashamed to own it.

We should never grumble at those things we could have prevented, nor at those things we could not have prevented.

The pleasure of commanding our passions is to be preferred before any sensual pleasure, because it is the pleasure of wisdom and discretion.

Femininities.

Wellesley College has a professor of cookery.

Senator Don Cameron has six daughters and Senator Evarts five.

The last new gem which fashion has adopted is the moonstone.

Every single action of our life carries in its train either a reward or punishment.

He: "Dearest Alice, I love you! Will you be mine?" She: "But where shall we go for our honeymoon?"

Queen Victoria puts her hand in her pocket to the extent of $500,000 for her recent hospitality to royal visitors.

The richest woman in Baltimore is Mrs. G. M. Hutton, who inherited $30,000,000 by the death of her father, the late Thomas Winans.

The names of women should be soft and clear, captivating the fancy, and ending in long vowels resembling words of benediction.

The last person burnt alive in England was a woman named Phoebe Harris; she was about 40 years of age, and suffered for the crime of coining.

One of the reasons given for General Sherman's persistent refusal to kiss Boston girls is the frivolous one that the spectacles make his nose cold.

There is a woman in Connecticut who wears a No. 9 shoe. When she gets her shoe down her husband walks around it and says: "Yessum, I will."

The daughter of George W. Clark, of Newport, Ind., is 5 years and 3 months old. She weighs 105 pounds and measures 3 feet around the waist.

Wife: "Now that you have bought a cow, who will milk her?" Husband: "Oh, he says the calf does that. So we'll have all the milk we want."

A pessimist, walking with his wife and meeting a whole school of girls: "Heavens and earth! The poor men! What a crowd of future mothers-in-law!"

The ages of women are not given in the Bible, the only exception being, we think, in regard to Sarah. As Ruth had been married before, she was very probably over 30.

Mistress, to servant: "Did you tell those ladies at the door that I was not at home?" Servant: "Yes, mam." Mistress: "What did they say?" Servant: "How fortinit!"

Women who have a habit of turning round in the street to inspect other women's dresses, will learn with envy that a fish has been found which has eyes in the back of its head.

Little Annie was playing very roughly with the kitten, carrying it by the tail. Her mother told her she would hurt pussy. "Why, no, I won't," she said: "I'm carrying it by the handle."

One bather at Ocean Grove, a correspondent declares, has a bathing dress that will present her as a female Mephistopheles—a red dress, stockings, sandals and a little horned cap on her head.

A lady being questioned in court the other day as to why she had changed her religion stated she had done so because, being separated from her husband, she determined to avoid meeting him in the next world.

Javelle water, used to remove tea and coffee, grass and fruit stains from linen, is made thus: Mix well in an earthern vessel one pound of sal soda, 6 cents worth of chloride of lime and two quarts of soft water.

"I love you," he protested, "better than my life. I would die for you if necessary." "Oh, nonsense!" replied the practical girl. "Promise me that you'll get up and make the fire, and I'll consider your proposition."

Matting is better than carpet for bedrooms, even in winter. It is more cleanly, as easily swept as a bare floor, and may occasionally be lightly rubbed with a cloth wrung out of salted water. Place a rug beside the bed.

The Rev. Miss Marian Murdock, pastor of the Unitarian Church of Humboldt, Kansas, has received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity from the Meadville, Pa., Theological Seminary. She is 35 years of age and preaches eloquently.

Little Dot: "Mamma, Dick kissed me!" Mamma: "I am glad he likes you so well, dear." "But it isn't wight." "Oh, it doesn't matter, pet. What makes you think that it isn't right?" "'Cause nurse told Uncle Harry so."

Some one has described the ideal wife as a woman who, before marriage, determines to spend her life in obeying the wishes of her husband, but who takes care at the same time to marry a man who has no wishes worth speaking of.

A Washington paper says: "Let the women do as they like. They probably will, whether or no; and let us be thankful that whatever they may do, or resolve to do, they will be compelled to remain women still." Well, there's force in that, too.

Happy were the man that should make the real woman his wife; happy the child that shall call her mother. She presideth in the house, and there is peace; she commandeth with judgment, and is obeyed. She ariseth in the morning; she considereth her affairs, and appointeth to every one their proper business.

Married people would be happier if each would try and be a real support and comfort to the other; if household expenses were always proportioned to receipts; if women were as kind to their husbands as they were to them when lovers; if each remembered the other was practically a human being, and not an angel.

Surf bathing is said to be the cause of more cases of deafness than any other one thing. A breaking wave is very likely to drive water forcibly into the ear and injure it, so there is generally sand in the water. By filling the ears with pellets of wool, however, harm may be avoided. Cotton will not do, because it becomes sodden.

Masculinities.

President Cleveland never retires before midnight.

The man who procrastinates struggles with ruin.

The man who never consults the thermometer is the coolest.

The chance of drawing a prize in a lottery shop is one in 70,000.

There is a preacher in St. Mary's, Ohio, named John L. Sullivan.

The horse-shoe cut of gents' vest fronts is changed to the old V-shape.

No man ever did a polite thing yet without feeling a little prouder for it.

Man attributes his misfortunes to bad luck, and his success to shrewdness.

A warm bath will often be found a valuable measure in cases of sleeplessness.

Be not afraid to say "No"—many a man has pined in misery for want of this courage.

It is the easiest thing in the world to discover all the defects in a man when we do not like him.

There were no Jews in England from the time of Edward I. to the days of Oliver Cromwell.

Dr. Philip A. White, a negro citizen of New York, owns $500,000 worth of paying property there.

There are more than sixty thousand persons confined in the penal institutions of the United States.

After bathing, rub the body to stimulate circulation, and then dress quickly; then take moderate exercise.

As the rose breatheth sweetness from its own nature, so the heart of a benevolent man produceth good works.

He whose only claim to the title "gentleman" is in his clothes, must necessarily be careful as to what he wears.

J. D. Van Gordon, a prominent citizen of Pike county, Pa., died recently from the effects of a bee sting on his wrist.

The Czar of Russia's highest aim is to be crowned "Emperor of Asia" on the site of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

In India there are fakirs who will lean up against a tree, put a few grains of wheat in their mouths, and sleep for two months at a stretch, while the wheat sprouts and grows.

A bookshop window in Paris is said to contain a placard inscribed:
"Autographs of Great Men,
From one cent up."

Daniel Murphy, a blind man in New York, has spent $20,000 to build a granite monument on Calvary Cemetery, on which is inscribed: "To outlast the British monarchy."

Young wife, petulantly: "Well, even if I don't come to meet you every night as I used to, what does it signify?" Young husband: "That we have been married six months."

Among the queer names in the Chicago directory for 1887 are the following: Woggow, Sara, Smatrkivolez, Smucrynski, Hop, Wow, Kocelck, Yaxis, Zwierchouaka, Sucicochowak and Trinak.

Dr. Farr favors 100 years for the tenure of life, but makes these divisions: Boyhood, 10 to 15; youth, 15 to 25; manhood, 25 to 50; maturity, 50 to 75; ripeness, 75 to 85, and old age from 85 upwards.

General Phil. Sheridan, Gen. Thomas L. James, Gen. N. P. Banks, Ben. Perley Poore and Benjamin P. Shillaber, author of the Mrs. Partington articles, all began life as newsboys or "printer's devils."

Blobson—"What makes you look so cheerful to-day, Dumpsey?" Dumpsey—"My daughter left the window open during the thunderstorm yesterday, and our piano was struck by lightning. You can't imagine what a relief it is."

London mail carriers now call at private residences for parcels, the same as do express messengers in this country. A scarlet card is furnished by the postal authorities, which, when displayed in the window, insures a call from the postman.

A German doctor has lately been making some investigations as to the size of men's and women's hearts. He found that there is a difference in favor of the man, the masculine heart weighing more and being larger than that possessed by the fairer half of creation.

"Will you trust me, Fannie?" he cried. "With all my heart, Augustus; with all my soul; with all my self!" she whispered, nestling on his manly bosom. "Would to heaven that you were my tailor!" he murmured to himself, and tenderly he took her to his arms.

A young man who broke an appointment with Horace Greeley, went to him the following day and made a very handsome apology. He was becoming very profuse in his excuses, when Mr. Greeley stopped him, saying: "My good boy, say no more; you have said too much already, for the man who is so good at making an excuse is seldom good at anything else."

Among the mendicants in New York is a once famous blind Frenchman, who, with his wife playing the harmonica, goes about the street singing. He is said at one time to have been the principal tenor in an excellent Paris opera company, but the loss of his eyesight forced him to retire, and he drifted about until he took up with street singing, which is credited with returning him on an average about $8 a day.

The oldest man in the world is said to be James James, a colored citizen of the United States, who resides at Santa Rosa, Mexico. He is 135 years old. He was born near Dorchester, S. C., in 1752. He was one of the laborers at Fort Moultrie during the unsuccessful attack by the British fleet in 1776. At present the rheumatism keeps James from walking, but he can drag himself a short distance, and otherwise is in fairly good health.

Recent Book Issues.

D. C. Lindsley has published a "Short-Hand Exercise Book" of his system of Takigraphy, or swift writing, in five parts. For sale by the author at 1539 Chestnut street, this city.

"Thekla" is a story of Viennese musical life by William Armstrong. It deals with the usual accompaniments of tales of its class, odd love passages, wonderful singers, operas, high society, the nobility, etc., only in this case they seem combined with less than ordinary skill. It is evidently its author's first production, and gives many signs of rawness both in conception and treatment. Lippincott & Co. Price, $1.

"Calamity Jane," one of Cassell's series of "Rainbow" novels, is a story of the Black Hills. It introduces stage robberies, road agents, and the other elements of its class. Calamity Jane, around whom the somewhat lively tale centres, is a mysterious woman who disguises herself in male clothing, and plays the deuce generally. It is not an altogether healthy book, but many will like it nevertheless. For sale by Wilson, 111 South Eleventh street. Price, 25 cents.

"The Republic of the Future; or Socialism a Reality," by Amanda B. Dodd, is a rich and highly amusing bit of satire. It is in the form of a series of letters from a foreigner to a friend at home. The date of the Republic is A. D. 2150, something over two hundred years hence. It pictures this country as it will be then through the influence of Socialism and Yankee ingenuity, etc. The treatment of the idea is excellent. Published by Cassell & Co., New York. For sale by Wilson, 111 South Eleventh street. Price, 50 cents.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The August number of *Lippincott's Magazine* opens with a romance by Sidney Luska, entitled "A Land of Love," the scene being laid among the American residents of the Latin Quarter in Paris. A powerful short story, entitled "Life for Life," is contributed by H. H. Boyesen. Edgar Fawcett has a pleasant paper on "Ouida." Arthur Edmands Jenks, of the class of '83, gives an entertaining picture of "Social Life at Yale." Louise Imogen Guiney writes a humorous little essay on "Bed." Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, who is one of the principal financial backers of the inventor Keely, writes on "The Keely Motor Secret." The sensational article of the number, "Is the Base-ball Player a Chattel?" is contributed by John Montgomery Ward, captain of the New York Ball Club. The poems of the number are contributed by Edith M. Thomas Wm. H. Hayne, F. D. Stickney, Kate Putnam Osgood, and Kate Vannah.

MEN IN PETTICOATS.—Men wore petticoats before women usurped this prerogative. When Henry VIII. went to meet Anne of Cleves he was habited, we read, "in a coat of velvet somewhat made like a frocke, embroidered all over with flattened gold of damaske, with small lace mixed between, of the same gold, and other laces of the same going traversewise, that the ground little appeared;" and in a description of a similar garment of his father, Henry VII. we read of its being decorated with bows of ribbon, quite as a girl of the present day would adorn a ball-dress. It is well-known that the garment was at first not a skirt, but, as the name denotes, a little coat. How it came to lose its upper half or body we do not know, unless the "petticoat" was made with long skirts for the sake of warmth, and in that case it was as much petticoat, as we understand it, as anything else. Easily enough petticoats, as the possession of man, are traced through the ages. In the inventory of the effects of Henry V., appears a "petticoat of red damask, with open sleeves," and although it is a question whether this had been fashion for a man or woman, it would, if a woman's, be the only instance known before Elizabeth's time of a woman using such a garment. Thus we hear nothing of women's petticoats before the Tudor period. "Good Queen Bess," with all her learning, which was essentially masculine in her age and time, had the true instinct of womanliness as regards personal adornment, and women have to thank her for her stockings and petticoats and many other luxuries which have become necessities, and which they now appropriate with a true belief in their inalienable right to their sole possession.

JAPANESE SWORDS.—Wonderful stories are told of the swordblades made by Japanese. They are said to be far superior to the world-renowned blades of Damascus and Toledo. It is even said that a very common thing for a Japanese soldier to do is to cut a pig in two at a single blow, and bars of lead, and even of iron, have been divided by these weapons without a notch or imperfection being visible on the blade. A sword of superior excellence is preserved as an heirloom in the Satsuma family, and with this blade a leaf floating on a stream has been cut in two by merely being allowed to drift against the edge. Here however, the Japanese performers take these same swords and dance upon them without injury.

"Ain't you almost boiled?" inquired a little girl of a gentleman, calling on her father and mother. "No, little one, I can't say that I am, but why do you ask, Daisy?" "Oh, because I heard mamma say that your wife kept you in hot water all the time."

Jenny.

BY M. B. D.

WHEN John Claghorn and Annie Sylvester were married the hundred and one friends who attended the magnificent wedding, and showered upon the young couple their congratulations and their presents, did so in just appreciation of their fitness each for the other.

That they were suited in every way to be life companions there could be no doubt. Both were rich, and neither had eccentric tastes that would clash with the matter-of-fact conventional habits of the other.

They had never distinguished themselves in any way worthy of mention, and were, on the whole, two average people, well educated, and with a sufficient stock of ordinary accomplishments to enable them to comport themselves with credit in any society.

No one who was present at the wedding ever dreamed that the young couple would, in forty-eight hours after the ceremony was performed, be on the point of separation.

After the wedding breakfast they proceeded to Guildford, and were comfortably domiciled in the groom's snug little cottage.

They were too well-bred to show their affection, each for the other, in public; but when alone their near and tender relation was the inspiration for endearing caresses, that would not interest the reader if described, and the bestowal of loving epithets that would be the veriest nonsense in print.

Dinner was served at six o'clock, and when the groom entered the library, while his wife retired to dress for the meal, a servant handed him a letter, which had been forwarded from his town address.

"From Gerald!" he cried, breaking the seal; and stepping to the window where the light was better, he read as follows:

"Scarborough, June 5.

"DEAR OLD JOHN.—The invitation cards reached me by this morning's post. I was not surprised, for I was confident you would like each other, and the outcome would be a wedding. My business is such that I will have to forego the pleasure of attending the nuptial festivities, but my congratulations are yours and hers. My offering I sent by express. Long life and happiness to Mr. and Mrs. Claghorn!

Jubilantly yours,

GERALD AINSWORTH."

"P. S.—I saw Miss Montgomery yesterday. You know her father is interested in some big contract, and he is here attending to his interests. Edna and her two sisters accompany him. She hopes to meet you and Mrs. Claghorn in town next season. While visiting her I talked a few minutes to Jenny. She is certainly benefited by the long trip, but she misses you sadly, and Edna says that for days after the parting her grief was violent, and she did nothing but cry, 'dear John, why did you leave me?' There is no doubt that a sight of your dear old face would brighten her up wonderfully, and I hope for her sake that Mrs. Claghorn will so overcome her dislike as to receive her. G. A."

He had barely finished reading this letter when the door opened and his wife entered the room.

He crushed the missive in his hand, and thrust it into an inner pocket with a guilty start. Dinner was announced, and they were seated tete-a-tete.

It was John Claghorn's intention to read the letter and make explanations to his wife during the meal, but a trifling circumstance occurred to prevent it.

They were chatting in that tender, confidential way which young couples so much indulge in during the honeymoon, when Mrs. Claghorn, as though suddenly recollecting something, turned to the waiter and said—

"Any letters, James?"

"Only one, madame—for Mr. Claghorn."

Confound the fellow's stupidity!" growled John inwardly.

And then, as his wife glanced at him inquiringly, he said, aloud:

"It is from Gerald Ainsworth. You know he is at Scarborough, and could not be present at the wedding. He sends his congratulations, and has forwarded his present which I fancy will be something unique, by express."

"May I read his letter?"

"Presently. I'll read it to you," was the answer.

But he abruptly changed the subject, and not refering to the letter again, she had forgotten it when they arose from the table.

A friend of theirs rode up, and Mrs. Claghorn ran out to greet her.

John retired to his dressing-room to change his coat; but somehow, when he shifted the contents of his pockets, Gerald Ainsworth's letter fluttered to the floor and escaped his observation.

There was a concert that night, and they were to be present.

While dressing, Mrs. Claghorn had occasion to enter her husband's room, and, spying the letter, picked it up.

"Gerald's letter," she said, glancing at the postmark. "I like him because he is so fond of John. I wonder what sort of people those Montgomerys are? John often speaks of them and Gerald is engaged to the oldest daughter, Edna. I hope she's a good woman, for he deserves the best of wives."

She indulged in this little soliloquy, holding the letter in her hand.

"I wonder what he says?" she ventured at last. "There is certainly no harm in my reading the letter, for John said I should."

Thus fortifying herself, she drew out the notesheet and read.

As her eyes followed the lines of the postscript her face grew pale and her lip trembled.

"Merciful Heaven!" she managed to gasp at last.

And she repeated over the mysterious postscript aloud. Then tears of grief, shame and jealous rage gushed from her eyes, and she stamped her feet until the mantel ornaments rattled.

"How could he deceive me so cruelly?" she cried. "Oh, John, I loved and trusted you, but I little dreamed you were such a heartless, unprincipled scoundrel! Oh! oh! oh!"

And she wrung her hands and would have torn her hair, had not her husband suddenly entered the room. She concealed the letter and faced him.

"What's the matter, dear?" he demanded halting on the threshold.

"Oh, you villain!" she hissed.

"Annie—Mrs. Claghorn!" he gasped, and took a step towards her.

"Don't touch me!" she cried, starting back with a gesture of scorn. "I thought you an honest man when I married you. A thousand times you have protested to me that I was the only woman you ever loved. But you lied to me; and now, when I have proof of your base perfidy, I despise and scorn you!"

"Why, gracious me! What have I done!" he cried, much astonished. "Base perfidy! Lies! What do you mean?"

"Ask yourself, Mr. Claghorn," she retorted, with cutting irony. "I am glad I learned the truth in time. Henceforth, sir, we are two! I shall telegraph to mamma instantly, and you will be at liberty to return to your first love!"

She swept from the room, although he sprang forward to detain her. He could not imagine the cause of her changed demeanor, but the ridiculousness of her tragic utterances amused him, and he could not repress a smile.

"I wonder what can be the matter?" he mused. "The woman is crazy, or has listened and believed the stories of some false friend. I'll demand an instant explanation."

He was thoroughly in earnest now and proceeded at once to her boudoir.

It was locked, and he could hear stifled sobbing inside.

"Annie!" he said, knocking on the panel.

No answer; but the sobbing ceased, and all was quiet.

"Little wife!" he continued.

Still silence.

"Mrs. Claghorn!"

Tuis in a stern, determined tone.

"Sir!" was the defiant response.

"Open the door!"

"I shall do nothing of the kind."

"I will break it down!"

"If you dare to, sir, I will scream for assistance and denounce you to the world!"

"Don't be a fool, Annie, and explain this masquerading. What is the matter? What have I done? I demand to know, that I may justify myself."

"Your tone of injured innocence does not deceive me, sir, for I have the proof of your infamy."

"Proof?" he repeated. "I fail to understand you."

"Indeed! Perhaps you will when I remind you that a letter which you carelessly dropped, and which I read—for you promised me I should do so—opened my eyes to your true character."

"A letter—of mine?" cried the husband.

And he pulled out the contents of his pocket and ran over the papers which it contained.

Gerald's letter was missing.

"It was Gerald Ainsworth's letter," he said. "It contained no secret. There is not a line in it that I cannot explain."

"How about Jenny?" she retorted, "who misses you sadly, and who would brighten up wonderfully at sight of your dear old face? Inconsolable maiden! It's a great pity that her 'dear John' ever left her to deceive me and wreck my life!"

At this John Claghorn laughed loud and long, and so boisterous was his mirth that his wife, irritated beyond endurance threw open the door and confronted him.

An angry retort was trembling on her lips, but he caught her in his arms, and despite her struggles kissed her repeatedly.

"You dear, foolish, little wife," he cried. "You have no cause to be jealous of Jenny and I know the poor bird misses me sadly, for she is very much attached to me."

"The poor bird!" repeated Mrs. Claghorn.

"Yes; Jenny is a very intelligent Brazilian parrot. When I first formed your acquaintance, if you recollect, we went to the Zoo. You spoke so contemptuously of the parrots and macaws, and vowed so vehemently that you could never bear to have one about you, that I was afraid to mention poor Jenny, and you never formed her acquaintance. I was much attached to her, but your good will was my paramount thought. I hated to sell her, and therefore gave her to Miss Edna Montgomery, who is fond of feathered pets. I was so concerned about the matter that I hated to read Gerald's letter to you, and therefore put you off with an excuse."

"Forgive me, John," she managed to articulate through her sobs.

And when he kissed away the tears, she said—

"You must send for Jenny at once. I shall never feel that I have made sufficient atonement until she is again in your possession. And, dear heart, I never again will be jealous."

A MATTER OF TASTE.

The Turks shudder at the thought of eating oysters. The Digger Indians of the Pacific Coast rejoiced in the great locust swarms of 1875 as a dispensation of the Great Spirit, and laid in a store of dried locust powder sufficient to last them for several years. The French will eat frogs, snails and the diseased liver of geese, but draw the line at alligators. Buckland declares the taste of the boa constrictor to be good, and much like veal.

Quass, the fermented cabbage-water of the Russians, is their popular tipple. It is described as resembling a mixture of stale fish and soapsuds in taste, yet next to beer, it has more votaries than any other fermented beverage. A tallow candle washed down with Quass, forms a meal that it would be hard to be thankful for.

In Canton and other Chinese cities rats are sold at the rate of fifty cents a dozen, and the hind quarters of the dog are hung up in the butcher's shop alongside of mutton and lamb, but command a higher price. The edible birds' nests of the Chinese are worth twice their weight in silver, the finest variety selling for as much as $30 a pound.

The negroes of the West Indies eat baked snakes and palm worms fried in fat, but they cannot be induced to eat stewed rabbits.

In Mexico parrots are eaten, but they are rather tough. The Gauchos of the Argentine Republic are in the habit of hunting skunks for the sake of their flesh. The octopus or devil fish when boiled and then roasted is eaten in Corsica and esteemed a delicacy. In the Pacific Island and West Indies lizard eggs are eaten with gusto.

The natives of the Antilles eat alligator eggs, and the eggs of the turtle are popular everywhere, though up to the commencement of the last century turtle was only eaten by the poor of Jamaica. Ants are eaten by various nations.

In Brazil they are served with a resinous sauce, and in Africa they are stewed with grease or butter. The East Indians catch them in pits and carefully wash them in handfuls like raisins. In Siam a curry of ant eggs is a costly luxury.

The Cingalese eat the bees after robbing them of their honey. Caterpillars and spiders are dainties to the African bushmen. After they have wound the silk from the cocoon the Chinese eat the chrysalis of the silkworm. Spiders roasted are a sort of dessert with the New Caledonians.

THE TEMPLE OF SERPENTS.—The small town of Werda, in the kingdom of Dahomey, is celebrated for its Temple of Serpents, a long building in which the priests keep upwards of a thousand serpents. These serpents, many of them of enormous size, may be seen hanging from the beams across the ceiling, with their heads downwards, and in all sorts of strange contortions. It often happens that some of these serpents make their way out of the temple into the town, and the priests have the greatest difficulty in coaxing them back. To kill a serpent intentionally is a crime punished with death; and if a European were to kill one, the authority of the king himself would scarcely suffice to save his life.

SUNFLOWERS.—The fact is now fairly well established that growing sunflowers are disinfectants, or serve as a preventive of miasmatic fevers. A case is reported in which a gentleman, owning property upon a river bank, planted sunflowers extensively, and as a result not a case of miasmatic fever has occurred among his tenants for years, although in his neighborhood that disease prevailed to a great extent. It is claimed that the sunflower in its growth absorbs large quantities of impure gases, feeding very largely through or by means of its large leaves. It absorbs nitrogen more rapidly than other plants, and will evaporate large quantities of water daily.

LOVE is without prudence, and anger without counsel.

WANAMAKER'S

The biggest Dry Goods and General Store in the World. 14 acres of crowded floor space. Dress Materials and things for women's use and wear first and foremost.

Cheviot all-wool check suitings, 3 styles, 32 colorings, 36 inch, 37½ cents. Serviceable, seasonable, stylish.

Printed Flannels, striped and figured; for Tennis or Boating, 75 cents.

Mixed Camel's Hair, soft and clinging, 3 shades; 42 inch, 37½ cents.

Foules, like Camel's Hair in weave and texture, but no scattered surface hairs, 75c. to $1.25.

The same, a little narrower, a little coarser, 40 to 45 cents.

Plain all-wool Veiling, 10 colors, street shades; 40 in., 25 cents to 35.

Albatross, the same, 50 cents to $1.

Crocodile Cottons, very light and very rough, 25 cents from 50.

Pure Silk Gloves, all the new shades, 39 cents.

Suede Gloves, 4-button, embroidered, 65 cents.

Mousquetaire Suede Gloves, 8-button, plain, 75 cts embroidered $1.

Black Satin Parasols, $1.50, worth $2.

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PHILADELPHIA.

Humorous.

WHEN HE COMES BACK.

When he comes back I'll say the fault was mine:
Forgive me, O my love! let pardon shine!
Upon these tears that have not ceased to flow
Since I offended thee, and saw thee go,
With flaming anger on thy brow benign!
My heart is wasted with the fires malign
Of vain regret. Oh, with a smile of thine
Restore my peace! Thus will I tell my woe
When he comes back.

To pity error is a grace divine:
'Twill move him but to see how I repine.
Is this his step? Now, then, I'll let him know
Just what I think of temper's pettish show!
I'll make him suffer anguish most condign
When he comes back.

—T. B.

Next to nothing—the figure one on a $10 bill.

What kind of a color is a blind man's buff?

A profane upstart—The man who sat on a pin.

Two to one—Result of a marriage ceremony.

If the doctor orders bark, has not the patient a right to growl?

A man always thinks he is on the wrong track when he sits down on one.

"I was rapped in slumber," said a tramp, as the policeman hit him with a club.

In case of a riot, send a pickpocket into the crowd, and it will very soon be dispersed.

A novel under the curious name of "The Wasp" is just published. It must have a bad ending.

"Listen to your wife," says a medical advertisement. As though one didn't have to listen to her.

We are indebted to the weather for many things—tan, sunburn, sunstroke, freckles, et sweaters, et sweaters.

Ice is very popular just now, but we can remember a time not six months ago when almost every one was down on it.

Polite but absent-minded bather, to friend up to his neck in water: "Ah, Jones! very glad to see you; won't you sit down?"

A pig would seem the best subject for medical students to experiment on, as he could be killed first and cured afterwards.

Mr. Piesknap: "Waiter, here is a button in the soup." Waiter: "Ah, yes—the cook's. Well, you can have it. He'll never miss it."

An old lady being late at church entered as the congregation was rising from prayers. "La!" said she, curtseying, "don't get up on my account."

Most of the summer hotels are without fire escapes. It is claimed that such arrangements are unnecessary, as the boarders soon become indifferent to death.

Teacher: "What is the difference between the cuckoo and other birds?" Pupil, having heard that the cuckoo didn't make his own nest: "He gets some other bird to lay his eggs for him."

An Irishman on board a vessel, when she was on the point of foundering, being desired to come on deck as she was going down, replied that he had no wish to go on deck to see himself drowned.

Robinson meets a friend who lost his wife the day before. "Allow me to offer my sympathies. Let me see—you were married—" "Thirty years." "Ah, yes! And it's hard to lose a wife just as one is growing a little used to her."

"Thought," says Dr. Munger, "may stay behind silent lips, but when it comes to feeling it runs to expression." We have noticed this in the cases of men who thought they were hitting a nail, but who felt that they had mashed their fingers.

"I'm going to become a missionary," she said, as she gazed at him with a why-don't-he-ask-me-to-marry-him expression on her face. Looking down upon her, he replied: "Don't you think that you had better begin on a he-then?" They are to be married soon.

"Are you feeling better, Mr. Featherly?" asked Bobby at the dinner table. "Feeling better? I haven't been sick, Bobby." I didn't know," said Bobby indifferently. "Ma and Pa were talking about your genealogy last night, and ma said it couldn't be much worse. I supposed you were sick."

"How are you getting on in your new place?" asked a lady of a girl whom she had recommended for a situation. "Very well, thanks," answered the girl. "I am glad to hear it," said the lady; "your employer is a nice person, and you cannot do too much for her." "I don't mean to, ma'am," was the innocent reply.

"How old would you take me to be, Mr. Snooks?" she lisped, looking unutterable things at him. "I dunno," he replied, twisting nervously about in his chair. "I'm awfully old, I assure you. I've seen twenty-three summers!" "Then you ought to wear glasses," he replied earnestly. "Why Mr. Snooks, glasses at twenty-three?" "Yes; your eyesight must be bad." "I'm sure I don't know why you should think so," she pouted. "Because I'm afraid about twenty summers have gone by you that you haven't seen."

A donkey who was tired of drawing his master's cart about went to the cow for advice, saying—"You have nothing to do all day long, while I work like a slave. Tell me how I can escape this drudgery." "All you have to do is to run away and smash the cart, replied the cow. The donkey determined to follow the advice, and next morning, when he set out for the forest with the cart after faggots, he suddenly kicked up his heels and started off on a gallop. "Oh-ho!" exclaimed the peasant, as he put on the whip. "I see what the trouble is with you! I am feeding you with too many oats. Hereafter your rations will be reduced one half."

Moral.—There is such a thing as being too smart.

THE WHITE FEATHER.

Who can imagine a gallant cavalier of ye olden time going off to wars without a waving plume in his cap? Why, its absence would so entirely mar the effect that the knight would scarcely seem worth one's admiration!

Long before the age of chivalry quaint ideas were extant regarding feathers, and some of our well-known sayings owe their origin to the waving plumes.

"To plume one's self" and "a feather in his cap" comes from the Hungarians, who placed in their caps a feather for each Turk killed, and therefore were decorated according to valor.

The use of the white feather as a sign of withdrawal from a contest or as a truce undoubtedly arose from the fact that in leaving the field the white feathers were the most easily seen.

The sending of a white feather to one intending fighting meant usually a warning from some friend that discretion would be the better part of valor.

The question has often been asked why the feathers of the peacock, beautiful as they are, have the reputation of bringing bad luck to the wearer. The East Indians and the North American Indians believe that feathers endow their owner with the vices or virtues of the bird from which they are plucked, and as the peacock is vain, arrogant, and greedy, he can scarcely endow one with all the virtues.

The kingfisher has been a highly honored bird, and to possess one of his feathers or a bit of his skin has meant great fortune.

The ignorant Tartars believe that he who touches a beautiful woman with a kingfisher's feather will gain her love.

People who can appreciate the beauty of ostrich feathers can imagine the appearance of helmets formed entirely of them; and yet they were so used by the ancients without a thought, apparently of their ornamental value.

Some old paintings show the artist's love for plumes of various kinds; the peacock fans wave before an eastern beauty, the long plumes in some hero's hat, the heron's feather in the saucy page's cap, while the plumes that fall far down on white and dimpled shoulders are depicted with the prominence they deserve.

Womankind, doubtless, will always approve of feathers—they are graceful and becoming, adaptive and elegant.

WIND AND WATER.—The most potent and practically injurious of Chinese superstitions is the doctrine of Fengshui, or wind and water, the theory of which is that all good influences come from the sweet south, and all bad influences from the bleak north; and it is in some way connected with the Great Dragon who occupies so prominent a position in Chinese art. No one building in a city must be built higher than another, so as to keep off the balmy south or attract the baleful spirits of the north. A railway may not be built, because it would disturb the graves of the dead, which have been carefully selected with a view to the south. Doors and windows are placed irregularly in houses, to avoid the evil spirits, who, like pawns at chess, can only move in direct straight lines.

BRILLIANT Elenor Kirk, who ranks among the best of newspaper correspondents in her line, thus writes the NEWS from Brooklyn, in reference to certain fashions:

The Worth manifesto in reference to unfashionableness of tapering waists is stirring things up at home and abroad. When it is no longer stylish to cramp the liver and paralyze the heart, and box-pleat the ribs, there may be a few more healthy women in the world. A fine figure is not to be despised, and it ought to be every woman's pride to make herself as attractive as possible. But Worth is right about plump waists. They are beautiful and skinny waists are not. The popularity of Ferris Good Sense Corset abroad as well as at home, argues well for the evolution of women. These should properly be called common sense waists, because they button in front and have firm shoulder straps which take the weight from the hips, and are provided with different sets of buttons for the skirts. Their children's waists are models of durability and healthfulness. Every woman who has at heart the interests of the race ought to be willing to say a good word for its benefactors, and Ferris Bros., of New York, are benefactors indeed.

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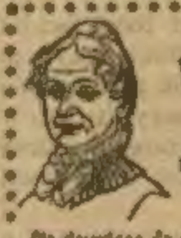
Much of our lives depend upon the persons with whom we live familiarly.



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Latest Fashion Phases.

The season is now upon us when many pretty gowns are wanted for all kinds of jubilant occasions, and there is certainly every variety of choice in material, color, and make.

For out-of-doors, as long as it is possible, it would be advisable to wear cream tones; they always look dressy and are generally becoming.

Silk canvas is a new material, which has plenty of substance. A good example I have just seen, had a cream ground and Jardiniere stripes, plenty of them, but each very fine—red, pink, green and brown, with a dash of mauve.

The skirt was simply draped, but the bodice had been so cut that these stripes formed a series of points in front. It was well trimmed with Marie Antoinette bows; the bunches of mousse green ribbon accentuated the tones.

Those who make dress a study are falling back on the styles worn by that beautiful and ill-fated queen, and there could be few prettier models.

Young girls are wearing dark shades, even for summer and fete dresses, especially blue royale, a deep, dark, old-fashioned blue, made up with putty color.

Some of the silk dinner-gowns for married women are of the most elaborate description. I specially admired one of a light green tone, made with long draperies, which opened here and there to show a lining of pink; while at the side a panel of blue and white brocade had been introduced, and cascades of lace brought up the front, caught down with green bows lined with pink—or, rather rose royale, a light, true tone.

Heavy knotted fringes, with just the heading that we are accustomed to see on the China crepe shawls, appear on the front of dresses; and very handsome they look, falling as a cascade down the front.

A vieux rose cashmere had been thus treated over satin of the same tone, and a cream crepon de laine over Merveilleux. By the bye, this crepon de laine is a commendable material, light, firm and rich looking.

Moire antique is well-worn this season—not only the moire Francaise, which used to be called watered silk, but the large patterned veritable old-fashioned moire. I will describe two dresses that were made in black:

One, for an elderly woman, had the moire front veiled with priceless old Spanish lace; the back a long, loose, distinct train of stripes, alternately key-patterned velvet and black bead. This fell longer than the skirt in simple folds; as much a distinct train as a court one would be.

It is usual now, in the draping of backs, to let a straight piece of the material lined in contrast fall down the centre; but it simply adds to the grace of the draping, and does not show as a distinct piece.

The other moire had the back and bodice of skirt all moire; the front of skirt and bodice draped with lace, having velvet stripes.

Judging from dresses prepared for the leaders of fashion, I should say that for races, fetes, and those occasions where gowns are specially worn to be seen, and are an important part of the day's proceedings, that rich materials are the exceptions, rather than the rule, but there has never been a year when better making and more originality of style was required.

The simplest striped silks are being employed, but they are completely changed in the hands of clever artistes in dress. A little gown will illustrate this made of brown or rather beige, white and black, quite narrow, the skirt simple and distinct from the bodice, but when on, the draperies were so intermingled that it appeared to be a polonaise.

A panel of gathered lace that matched one of the colors in the stripe, but covered with silk embroidery in Paisley tones, had been introduced on the side of the skirt and bodice, apparently in one piece.

Another distingue gown of quite a different class was a deep red mousseline de laine, covered with white pin point spots, a skirt with long draperies, a full bodice opening over a couple of stripes of black velvet, which formed the waistcoat, just as in woolens, the wide, coarse, loose woven braids are made to answer the same purpose.

If you desire handsome stuffs, there are plenty to be had which must of necessity be made simply to display them to advantage.

The upstanding transparent epaulettes and ruffs and collars are new and lovely; they belong to a period when fine dress was a fine art.

For fine weaving I have seldom seen anything better than a silk transparent gauze covered with swallows in fine close-woven silk all black. But such magnificent stuffs should be worn in the evening.

More suited to the fashion of the hour for day wear is a gray and white wool and silk material, with white moire ribbons, or a soft make of black and white striped silk, made with full bodice and just a loose revers of deep rich dark green silk on one side, and long, looped bows of the same tone from the waist.

There is a new make of basque for the back of bodices. It is full and pleated, the pleats caught together with elastic, so that the fulness of the skirt throws it up.

This is often bound with velvet, which is carried round the bodice, having an open jacket in front; from beneath this come two pieces of soft muslin of crepe de Chine, generally cream, which cross in front, and are secured under a pointed band of velvet at the waist.

This is a dressy style, and loose white fronts can be added in various ways to almost any bodice, and furnish up a gown wonderfully, only it is necessary to know how to wear them. Dress now requires careful handling. You cannot dress well and in a hurry nowadays.

A fashionable trifle, which combines a fair share of comfort, too, are the white and black beaded habit-shirts and long sleeves made to be worn with low square or V-shaped bodices.

The habit-shirts are simply put on first before the bodices. The sleeves have to be tacked in; they change the aspect of a gown, and make it suitable to many occasions when an open bodice would probably be too cold. Just at the moment they are being largely worn by women of fashion who dress well.

A bodice that will suit most figures without alteration is made of plain zephyr cloth, pink, blue, or whatever tone is desired, with sailor-collar, cuffs, small under vest, and a sailor's knot in striped zephyr to match.

They are unlined, and gathered back and front, with a belt and buckle, and fasten with buttons, the full basque coming over the skirt.

They are particularly well suited to lawn tennis and boating, and are quite inexpensive. They can be worn with almost any kind of skirt.

There is also a large choice of pretty made up skirts, well-hung and draped, at a low price. Some are made in soft striped woolens, some in tweeds, some in serge, well-braided in panels.

Odds and Ends.

SOME CHEAP DELICACIES.

It falls to the lot of most people to cater, if only occasionally, for the possessors of small appetites, who are not necessarily invalids, but who require food in small quantities, daintily prepared and served.

In the hope of aiding such in their endeavors to provide little dishes that embody economy, nutriment, and variety, these few hints are given:

Egg Cutlets.—Cut small a firmly-boiled egg; add a tablespoonful of bread-crumbs, the same quantity of grated cheese, with a pinch of curry powder, salt, pepper and grated nutmeg. Mix the whole with the yolk of a raw egg, and shape like a mutton cutlet. Dip it in the white of the egg, then into bread-crumbs, and fry brown; garnish with fried parsley.

Egg Rissoles.—The above mixture, with the addition of chopped parsley and thyme, can be enclosed in very thin pastry, shaped into balls or rolls, and fried or baked; they are very delicious, and any scraps of pastry may be used, but must be thin.

Celery a la Parisienne.—Cut the white part of a head of celery into equal lengths, tie in a bundle, and boil in water—just to cover, with salt and a bit of butter in—until tender. Keep the celery warm, thicken the liquor with an ounce each of flour and butter, and at the last moment put in a few drops of lemon juice or white vinegar. Lay the celery on toast, and pour the sauce over it.

Macaroni Mould. An ounce of well-boiled macaroni, cut small, and the same weight of bread-crumbs and sliced cheese, are to be mixed with a tablespoonful each of cream and tomato sauce or conserve, one egg, salt and cayenne. Fifteen minutes in a greased tin—a small cake tin—in a moderate oven, will convert this into a tasty dish.

Haricots with Tomatoes.—Put a cupful of nicely boiled haricot beans into a small dish, pour over some parsley sauce, and garnish with a tomato thinly sliced and grilled. Previous to grilling spread each slice nicely with a dash of mustard and butter.

Haricots with onion sauce or fried onions are very tasty and nutritious.

Hominy is not much used, indeed many have never tasted it, and while delicious in the form of porridge, etc., it is equally so in the the place of a vegetable. It makes a most pleasant change from ordinary diet, and is said to be excellent for brain workers. We give below a good mode of preparing it as a savory:

Sprinkle and stir two to three ounces (for one person) into a quarter-pint of fast-boiling water, salted a little; let it swell and cook gradually for an hour. Flavor with herbs and grated cheese, with salt and cayenne to suit the palate.

A word, by the way, to recommend hominy as a thickening medium for soups and stews generally; it can be used in place of rice, barley, etc., and is improved by preliminary soaking for every purpose. The undermentioned is one of the cheapest and nicest soups we know:

Half a pint of water, a tablespoonful each of hominy, minced celery, onion, or leek, and one potato, to be cooked until the whole can be passed through a sieve. Reboil this with a quarter of a pint of milk, and serve with some fried bread cut into dice. A little lemon juice or white vinegar, added at the last moment, improves this and most other white soups.

Chops and steaks naturally suggest themselves in connection with small appetites, and we are forcibly reminded that they become intensely wearisome to many people owing to the lack of variety in the mode of cooking and serving. Yet how easy it is to avoid monotony and ring the changes in this respect! Indeed, the modes are so multitudinous, one hardly knows which to select for recommendation.

Cutlets a la Parmesan are very delicious. The best end of the neck should be used, and trimmed, then dipped into flour, beaten egg, grated Parmesan, and plain biscuit-crumbs, when the cutlets may be fried, or wrapped in buttered paper, and carefully grilled; they need no sauce, but must be served hot.

Veal Cutlets may be prepared as above. Take a slice from the fillet, half an inch thick, and cut into rounds; serve with rolls of fried bacon and sprigs of fried parsley. The trimmings of veal will make a tasty mince.

A Steak with Mushroom Mince is a popular dish. Cook as many mushrooms as required in a little butter and lemon juice until tender, then mince them; add an equal bulk of bread crumbs, a little salt, cayenne, and a grate of nutmeg, with some of the mushroom liquor; spread this on the steak, roll and skewer it, and cook in a Dutch oven, on a gridiron, or in a good oven. Serve the rest of the mushroom liquor with the steak.

Potato chips or ribbons are a suitable accompaniment to the above, or cold potatoes may be re-dressed by slicing them a quarter of an inch thick, and tossing them in a little butter melted in a stewpan until lightly browned. The last thing put in some chopped parsley and a few drops of lemon juice or vinegar.

An apple grated and stewed with meat of any sort, will insure its being tender, and vinegar has the same effect. Vinegar or lemon juice is also useful in removing the strong flavor from beef kidney; if sliced, and soaked for a time in the acid, it becomes almost as mild as a sheep's kidney.

A most enjoyable "snack" can be had for a few cents by rolling a pig's foot until very soft, then taking out the bones, which must be put back in the liquor, and simmered until there is about a teacupful, when a minced onion and a grated carrot should be put in; when done, lay the foot in to get hot through, then serve. A sheep's or calf's foot is equally good cooked in this way.

A very dainty salad is made of equal quantities of boiled beetroot and Spanish onion, raw tomatoes, and cucumber; the dressing is oil, vinegar, cayenne, salt and a pinch of sugar and mustard.

A BRIGHT little boy of seven years, was corrected by his father the other day for having been, to put it mildly, mistaken in his facts. "Remember the example of George Washington, my boy," said the careful father. "Who was George Washington, papa?" queried the hopeful. "Why he was the man who couldn't tell a lie, of course." "What was the matter with him—couldn't he talk?" There is much anxiety in the paternal mind as to this youngster's future.

WE complain that our life is short, and yet we throw away much of it, and are weary of many of its parts.

Confidential Correspondents.

SCROODGE.—*In vino veritas*, if literally translated, means, "In wine, truth." It is used to express the idea that drunken men speak the truth, meaning that the real character comes out when a man is under the influence of drink.

NEMO.—Palpitation of the heart is, as often as not, of purely nervous origin. Try and distract your attention from the ghost. Avoid suppers, which very likely disagree with you and so cause the nightly onset of palpitation.

SARAH.—It depends on the circumstances of the case. If he asks for her company home from some other place, it may only mean that he wishes to be polite to her. But if he should signify that he wished to be her "steady company," it might imply love and marriage.

G. W.—The first King of Prussia was Frederic, in 1701; there have since been Frederic II. called the Great, and four Frederic Williams. The royal house of Prussia is of the house of Hohenzollern, the same way as the English royal family belonged to the house of Brunswick.

H. K.—No, not a bit. Your friends are unkind to annoy you about such a matter. They probably do not mean anything serious by it, but only wish to have a little fun at your expense. Some of the greatest men the world has known have been short in stature, and some of the most stupid have been giants in size.

ANNIE.—It is a phrase which was used by Lord Brougham, in a speech made in the year 1828. He was contrasting the influences of peace and education which those of war and violence, and said: "The schoolmaster is abroad, and I trust to him, armed with his primer, against the soldier in full military array."

PHILO.—"Platonic friendship" means a friendship between persons of opposite sexes into which the idea of love in any form is not permitted to enter. Such friendships are a good deal talked about, but seldom seen. They do not come off successfully. As a rule, ideas of the kind only lead to serious mischief. Avoid them, we beseech you.

CONSTANT.—Some people are naturally deficient in the musical sense, and if you have been learning the violin for three years and are not yet able to keep time, the probability is that you suffer from this defect. The only thing we can advise you to do is to get a metronome and play to its beatings; perhaps this rigid discipline will sooner or later bring about improvement.

ACCURATE.—St. Helena takes its name from having been discovered on St. Helena's day, the 21st of May, 1501. It was taken by the English from the Dutch in 1673, and was held by the East India Company by a Royal Charter until 1833. It was actually in the possession of the Company when the Emperor Napoleon was imprisoned and died there but was ceded to the Government for the purpose of his occupation.

LERN.—"Od" or "odic," force, is the name invented by Baron von Reichenbach, and applied to what he deemed a new force in nature, which was all pervading, and manifested itself at the poles of magnets, crystals, etc. The theory was long discredited, in spite of Reichenbach's years of patient research, but within the last year or so the subject has been reinvestigated, and the investigators consider that there is some truth in these theories after all.

SELINA.—According to Longfellow, Raphael is known as "the angel of the sun." Milton calls him "the affable angel." He is one of the "seven spirits" that stand before the throne of God, and is distinguished in "Christian Art" by a pilgrim's staff, and carrying a fish, in allusion to his apocryphal journey with Tobias. Uriel is reputed as being the sharpest-sighted spirit of all in heaven, and the strongest star amongst the stars.

MYSTIFIED.—The tradition of the "Wandering Jew" is derived from the crucifixion of our Lord, when he is supposed to have been the doorkeeper of the Judgment-hall, in the service of Pilate. He is fabled to have struck our Lord, saying, "Get on faster," whereupon our Lord declared, "I am going, but thou shalt tarry till I come." There are various other traditions like the above, and several tales of the return of the "Wandering Jew." Croly wrote a tale called "Salathiel," and Southey the "Curse of Kehama," and founded them on this tradition.

G. W. H.—This correspondent says that he is seventeen years old, and that when he meets young ladies in the street who speak to him, he feels embarrassed, and does not know what to do. "I have a notion," he says, "that I ought to bow and lift my hat to them, but I never can bring myself to do either, and so act like a frightened goose. Please tell me what I should do." You should bow and lift your hat as gracefully as possible. It is a very simple matter when you become a little used to it, although, like everything else, it is a somewhat awkward business at first.

F. S. C.—It has been suggested that the custom of sending people on bootless errands on the first of April is a travesty of the sending hither and thither of Christ from Annas to Caiaphas, and from Pilate to Herod, because during the Middle Ages this scene in Christ's life was made the subject of a miracle play at Easter, which occurs about the month of April. It is more probable, however, that it is a relic of some old heathen festival; and it is at least possible that its origin is identical with that of the Hull Festival, which is observed in India on the first of March in precisely the same way. But the only things really certain about it are that it is of great antiquity and of very wide observance, the first of April being sacred to practical jokes over almost the whole of America and Europe.

PHILOLAS.—A married man who indulges in the habit of flirting with young ladies in the presence of his wife must be unsound either in mind or morals. Your plea that "the wife is willing he should do so" is of no avail. We doubt if there ever was a wife whose feelings would not be either mortified or hurt by such conduct on the part of her husband, although there doubtless are many women who would not permit anyone to become cognizant of such mortification of mind or soreness of heart. In order to hide her own chagrin and cover her husband's despicableness a wife will often smile at what in reality gives her inexpressible pain. This is probably the case with the lady to whom you refer. Her husband's ill-mannered flirtations must in the nature of things occasion her much grief, and he must be either a very foolish or a very bad man to perpetrate them.